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ABSTRACT

Describing Wisconsin's Project CONNECT, this handbook provides information enabling communities to start and operate a volunteer-based, prevention-oriented program of support services for teenage parents. Chapters 1 and 2 provide brief overviews of problems associated with adolescent parenthood from national and community perspectives. Chapter 3 summarizes the 5-year history of Project CONNECT, indicating its origin in the Family Enhancement Program in Dane County, Wisconsin. Chapter 4 provides materials to aid volunteers in exploring their motivations and values. Chapter 5 contrasts medical and prevention models of intervention and lists beliefs, values, and goals of the Family Enhancement Program, with particular attention being given to family wellness and health enhancement. Chapter 6 delineates ways of using volunteers to provide services to teenage parents. Chapter 7 describes in detail a 10-step model of project development. Chapter 8 briefly discusses the staffing and funding of the project, while chapter 9 provides basic information about program evaluation. Materials related to the project are appended. Appendix I includes a brochure, screening exercises, a volunteer training outline, a volunteer survey instrument, volunteer reporting forms, guidelines for childbirth coaches, a program evaluation form and data, and sample letters. Appendix II provides guidelines for conducting a facilitated meeting and a sample agenda, a list of assumptions concerning the process by which individuals change, a teen sexual activity fact sheet, and data concerning live births in Wisconsin in 1981. In conclusion, prevention and volunteer program resources for adolescent parents are listed. (RH)

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Connecting Volunteers With Teenage Parents

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a good way to beat the odds

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The Family Enhancement Program

CONNECTING VOLUNTEERS WITH TEENAGE PARENTS

A GOOD WAY TO BEAT THE ODDS

By Peg Scholtes

With special thanks to:

Jessie Crane, for support, guidance and editing assistance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

WHY THIS HANDBOOK?

Teenage pregnancy has been described as an epidemic. There are severe consequences for young fathers and mothers and for their families when a pregnancy and the birth of a child occur. There are often severe consequences for the baby, too. Our society is troubled by the dilemma of children giving birth to and parenting children.

Normal adolescence is usually regarded as being difficult. The teenager's sense of self develops. The result typically is a continuously varying blend of child and adult. The normal behaviors of normal teens may be difficult for the rest of the family to understand and to deal with. On their way to being adults, teenagers have to grapple with vital decisions about goals and values. Typically, they work at these decisions by experimenting with lifestyles, relationships, and values.

When a teenager is pregnant, or is an expectant father, or is parenting, the adolescent years become even more difficult. The conflicting needs for dependence and independence become crucially important. There isn't as much room for mistakes. Caring for a baby involves overwhelming responsibilities. Relationships with peers and parents may change overnight. The need for sound planning increases, while following through on plans becomes more difficult. Often the teen who has been living at home with a family has to become an adult quickly. The teenaged "adult" is suddenly out in the world with his or her child to care for; there has been little opportunity or encouragement for planning, preparation, and finding a network of resources for help and support. Often these young people become isolated from their community, family and peers.

There are many theories about why adolescent pregnancy occurs. Many people indicate a lack of self-esteem; failure in school; family problems; incest; overly lenient or overly strict parents as possible reasons. Others implicate a permissive society where sex is promoted through the media. Some fault the lack of preventive sex education and access to birth control. Obviously some adolescent pregnancy results because of a careless attitude or impulsivity where none of the mentioned problems exist. Reasons and theories, however, do not change the fact that both the teenage parents - father and mother - and their child, face very poor statistical odds.

<u>Statistical Data on Teen Pregnancy and Parenthood</u>

-- Medical problems for mother and child are much greater than average; the younger the mother, the greater the risk.

-- Teen mothers face much greater than average risks for unemployment and welfare dependency.

-- Eight out of ten mothers under 17 do not finish high school.

-- There is a much higher proportion of domestic violence in the homes of teen parents as compared to families in general.

-- There is a higher incidence of child abuse in teen parent families.

-- Most teen mothers (96%) do not place their children for adoption.

-- Marriages to teens are three times more likely than the average to end in divorce.

-- More than half the teen mothers who have a child before 17 have another child before finishing their teens.

While these statistics and indicators are taken from national sources, the figures for Wisconsin are comparable. Tables for teen births in Wisconsin are given in the Appendix.

These are terrible odds to face. However, the premise of this handbook is that, given the help and support, teen parents can beat the odds. Many of the disastrous consequences of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood result from a lack of resources, both material and social. These young parents don't yet have the know-how for locating and using the resources available. With neither experience nor support, they are likely to find themselves isolated -- increasingly and overwhelmingly isolated. However, while adolescent parents have special needs, they, like all people, also have special strengths. A support program will be more successful if it draws on the participants' internal strength as part of the response to need.

This handbook is intended to help communities develop their own programs, modified to suit their own circumstances. It draws heavily on Family Enhancement's experience with the CONNECT Project, as it has developed into an energetic, volunteer prevention program over a period of five years. This model can be adapted to suit different communities or regions. This handbook details a process for building a project that will respond to your own community's needs and circumstances. This process is especially suited to helping adolescent parents in smaller communities and rural areas where no such programs currently exist. A small group of volunteers can use this process to help just a few teen parents. Organizations and agencies already in existence can also benefit from this handbook in starting and building up volunteer programs.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM FOR COMMUNITIES

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM FOR COMMUNITIES

The adolescent parent is your next door neighbor. She may be your sister, your niece. He may be your paper carrier, your son's best friend. The adolescent parent may be your child.

The stereotype of the teen parent is a poor, under-educated highschool drop-out. But teen parents are found in high schools, in the top of their classes, they are found on football teams, in technical schools and colleges. They are workers, students, black and white. They are as individual as any adolescent.

The reasons why teenagers get pregnant or become fathers are varied. Some pregnancies are intentional. Some are pure accidents. Some pregnancies come after years of sexual activity. Other pregnancies result on the first occasion of sexual intercourse.

Teen pregnancy often gives parents, teachers, ministers and community people reason to panic. It is serious. Being a parent is always serious business; planned or unplanned, wanted or unwanted. Parenting is tough. Parenting is important.

One thing that is more serious than teen pregnancy is the tendency to ignore it. It would be so easy to pretend it doesn't exist. But then the drastic statistics come true...a reality for those who care about the teenage parents, for the baby, for the adolescent parents. Often when teens become parents, they become automatic adults. At least it is easier to make them into adults, a role which is understood, than to deal with them as children who are also parents of a child - a role which is incomprehensible.

What should be done for them? What should be expected of them? Some people take the attitude that if the teen is old enough to conceive a child then she is old enough to raise one. It is common for people to expect that a teen should carry the responsibility for the child, even when they are very young.

Mother Nature has played a trick on us. In today's society adolescence is a time of trial and experimentation, not usually one of great responsibility. Physiologically, many girls are able to conceive at the age of ten. Few people would claim that a ten year old is old enough to raise a child. (Most parents would admit that no one is really "ready" to have a child - there are too many surprises.) But almost anyone will agree that almost all teens are "too young," that is until they are pregnant and something has to be done with them. Then the response is often one of ignorance - pretending the dilemma doesn't exist.

Many teens who become pregnant have abortions. While the debate about abortion continues, there is general agreement that teen abortion is a serious issue. No one claims that abortion is easy, or the best way to achieve birth control. There is a growing trend for teens who have abortions to become pregnant soon after the abortion. Some indicate that they felt so guilty that they got pregnant again on purpose, in an attempt to make up for their aborted baby. Few will argue with the fact that there are too many abortions, few will argue with the fact that there are too many babies born to adolescent parents. Yet with all that agreement, little has been done about the problem.

The solution lies in our communities, in our schools and churches, in our homes. There must be a growing awareness and use of prevention strategies to stop adolescent pregnancy. The state of Wisconsin is working to make these strategies available. In 1985 the first funding of significant amounts has been made available to prevent adolescent pregnancy. Nationally there is a growing awareness of the problem too. All over the country, creative and strong efforts to confront this dilemma are starting.

While significant steps to stop adolescent pregnancy are developing, what should be done with teen parents of today? The incidence of repeat pregnancy in the teen years is alarming. The obstacles that teen parents have to face are incredible. The children and the family members and the teen parents all are at great risk for terrible problems. There is also a strong generational pattern of adolescent pregnancy. It is not unusual for a grandmother to be in her early 30's.

The greatest problem of all is usually isolation. While the isolation may be the result of geographical location, it is usually one which is imposed by the community; by the response to pregnancy in the school, or by a lack of peer contact. Out of shame or embarrassment it may be self-imposed. There is a growing awareness that social support networks are essential for the health of individuals and of families. These networks are friends, family and neighbors who make a caring community for those within it. Teen parents often lack this sort of community, which can relieve the isolation.

The other problem is money to support programs for teen parents. Financially the teen parent drains the society. Most teen parents exist on AFDC or other governmental programs. Programs which could enhance the support system of the teen parent usually do not exist. The problem of money is most severe in rural areas or smaller communities where there are not enough teen parents to merit a program or a project.

During the last five years, there has been a decreasing amount of funding available for human service programs. This growing decline has forced the human services community to look at other options.

At the same time there has been a growing interest in using prevention strategies. Prevention saves. In all areas of our lives, prevention approaches are being used to meet needs...in order to prevent problems.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONNECT EXPERIENCE - HOW IT WORKS

(Real Life Stories)

THE CONNECT EXPERIENCE

A Brief History - 1980 - 1985

The CONNECT Project grew from Family Enhancement, a community based project in Dane County, Wisconsin. The Family Enhancement Program is an agency which facilitates a variety of supportive programs for families, especially parents. Parent's Places are the core of the program. These centers have provided opportunities for parents to share information and concerns with other parents. Parent's Places also provide climates which encourage families to give and get mutual support. Parent's Places are intended for all parents, from diverse situations and backgrounds.

Originally in 1980 there was a dream that teen parents would have their own Parent's Place. For a short time a separate program was attempted with little success. Usually the teen parents had better meetings, more participation, and seemed to get more from other parents when they participated in the integrated settings of the regular Parent's Places. The focus of the Young Parent Project (as it was then called) turned to providing more staff time to direct upon individual adolescent parent's concerns. Promoting community involvement with teen parents and providing some direct support to individuals was the direction of the program.

During the second year of the project, the one-to-one time that was requested from teen parents was almost impossible to manage. There was no way possible for a 1/2 time staff person to provide the time to all of the young parents who seemed to need support. (A childbirth and hospital experience could easily take the 20 hours of a week which was allotted to the project.) It was during this time that the participant parents at Parent's Places began to offer their assistance. Increasingly it became clear that some kind of skills practice and training for these volunteers would be necessary. The idea for the CONNECT Project was born.

The Family Enhancement Board understood that the individual needs for support of some teen parents were exceptional and encouraged the preparation of an Innovative Grant Proposal from United Way of Dane County. The Board was also very concerned that the project would not "take over" for teen parents. The Board members assisted in helping to assure that the prevention approaches of the networking and mutual support employed by the Family Enhancement Program would continue in the CONNECT Project. (Three Board members were in the first training session of the CONNECT Project.)

The United Way grant was awarded to Family Enhancement and the CONNECT Project began in January of 1983.

The basic goals of the project have not changed in the last two years. There have been, however, a significant number of changes in recruiting, screening, training and the use of volunteers. At first, the volunteers were all people who were known to the staff of the Family Enhancement Program. The majority of the first volunteers were parents who had attended Parent's Places or who were on the Family Enhancement Board. After the first year, the community became more interested in CONNECT and there were many inquiries about volunteering. It became necessary to develop tools and procedures for screening and checking references of potential volunteers. One of the benefits of the increased participation of the community was the large number of former teen parents who wanted to help. Their experiences have been invaluable to the project.

There have been a steady stream of participants in the project. Often now (1985), teenage parents hear about the project from friends and refer themselves.

The quality of the work of the volunteers has gained a great reputation. Hospital personnel and staff from other agencies often indicate their respect for the quality of the work which the volunteers do. As the numbers of participant teen parents grow, there is an increasing need for keeping some records. At the beginning this was not necessary because the facilitator-coordinator of the project knew all of the participants. Now sometimes volunteers make the initial contact with the teen parent and all of the programmatic contact is done in the community or in the home of the volunteer or the participant.

Recently Family Enhancement has become the lead agency in a county-wide effort to prevent adolescent pregnancy. The adolescents in the CONNECT Project will be helping to provide workshops for other teens. Professionals in the community will have the experiences of the participants in the CONNECT Project to use in their work. It is hoped that the teen parents will help to prevent other youth from having unwanted pregnancies.

THE CONNECT EXPERIENCE - HOW IT WORKS

The CONNECT Project is a prevention program which links trained volunteers with teenage parents and their families.

Volunteers provide information, resources and support. Because it is a prevention program, a focus upon the strengths, not on the problems of the teen parent family is primary. The teen parent usually assists the volunteer in determining the needs which she (or occasionally he) has. Sometimes a referring professional or friend may also help in identifying the needs. Because of the individual needs, a variety of supports are offered.

Assistance to teen parents might include:

- prepared childbirth coaching
- phone calls and personal visits from the volunteer
- tutoring assistance
- translation assistance
- occasional child care or respite care
- sharing of home management skills
- information, referrals and follow-up with other community agencies or programs
- money management assistance
- modeling of child management and positive parenting skills
- modeling of adult behaviors
- transportation to doctor, WIC, store, etc.
- personal contacts, friendship support
- access to recreational, educational resources and activities
- advocacy and assistance with legal, medical, social services and educational systems
- temporary housing

One of the greatest needs of the teen parent is relief from isolation. Any of the above might help provide this relief. While any of this assistance might be seen as "services" to teen parents, the mode in which they are offered is different than in a traditional setting. Because the support is offered by volunteers, they are often seen by teen parents as "friends" who are helpers, not experts who are there to do something to them.

An ultimate goal of the CONNECT Project is to enable young parents to form their own support network, resulting in independence and interdependence. A major victory is when a former "helpee" teenaged parent becomes a helper for someone else, providing the kind of support which they have formerly received.

CONNECT assistance is available to the family members of teen parents. Families of pregnant, expectant or parenting teens are

likely to be stressed. They may be unable to provide much support to their children until they are able to deal with their own feelings and to get some support for themselves. Many issues are involved in the feelings of a parent when their child is pregnant. They may think "Where did I go wrong?" or "Why didn't she tell me about sexual activity, I would have helped her get birth control." or "She has been such a problem and now this." Parents of the expectant or new father may be ignored; they are easy to forget in this whole situation. They may be pretty powerless. Just as the expectant father can feel powerless about decisions that are made, his parents are even more out of touch and usually have little choice about the fate of their grandchild.

A whole family is affected by a pregnancy, especially when it is a teen who is pregnant. Depending on the age of the teen and the situation of the family, some degree of support is usually necessary. This may include financial support and certainly includes emotional support if it is at all possible.

Volunteers can help family members. Often parents who are also parents of teen parents can assist by offering a sympathetic, listening ear. This kind of support will enable parents to think through their choices and find ways to help their children. Usually parents are upset about a pregnancy, yet want to help their children all that they can. Because of their strong emotions, there is often conflict and the first few months of a pregnancy (sometimes longer) can be quite stormy.

If a teen is very young her family may be faced with a decision which may involve raising the child, or for a time being the primary care givers. This is a big commitment, for any family. It is even harder when they are forced into making decisions over which they have little actual control and when their own child and their own grandchild's futures are at stake. The pregnancy of a teen can significantly change the whole family structure and function.

Problems with siblings of the pregnant and parenting teen are not uncommon. Feelings may range from jealousy to rage to joy over the new baby. Most families do not breeze through teen pregnancy. Sometimes family counseling is appropriate - as special support during the stressful time is essential.

Teen fathers may need the same sorts of support that teen mothers do. Sometimes young dads need special support for their roles when they are isolated from their children. Other fathers are often helpful in encouraging teen fathers' involvements with their children.

Each participant in the program may see the program in a different way. To some, visiting Parent's Place with a volunteer is important. (Parent's Place is a drop-in center for parents and children.) For others, a chance to get infant clothes at garage sales, or to talk

with a former teen parent is helpful. For a parent who is a high school student, a little extra help with studies may prevent them from dropping out. Because of the flexibility and diverse interests of volunteers, a wide range of supportive assistance or meeting of needs can take place. Perhaps one of the most important benefits for teen parents is knowing that someone cares. Some adolescent parents may just have the need to talk to someone who is non-judgmental.

Finding Support - Becky's Story

Sam was in the hospital with an ulcer. One night when he couldn't sleep he talked with the night nurse about his home life. Luckily the nurse on duty was a participant in Parent's Place and knew about the CONNECT Project. Sam's 16 year old daughter was pregnant. The nurse suggested that he talk to another father who had gone through the same thing with his daughter. He called CONNECT and found out that Becky could get help. Becky was referred to CONNECT by her father.

Becky was the last of four children in her family. Sam and his wife Nancy were eagerly awaiting their retirement from parenting. Sam had been plagued by health problems and was just rebuilding his relationship with his wife after some hard years of almost ignoring his family, overworking and feeling worthless in his night job as a custodian. Sam's illness enabled him to get to know his wife again. He was pleased to see a new spark in Nancy as she started to work outside the home for the first time in her life. Nancy was enjoying the stimulation and the challenge that she discovered in her door to door sales job. Because she was her own boss, she was able to be flexible about her schedule. For the first time Nancy and Sam's roles were switched with Sam taking more responsibility for the things around the house. Sam and Nancy were starting to enjoy the independence that came as Becky developed her own social life at high school.

Becky met Bart at an apartment party that her older brother invited her to. Bart was confident and cheerful. Becky fell madly in love with him. Bart really knew how to treat her; opening car doors, and asking her what she wanted to do when they would go out. Bart had a car and worked part-time. He also went to technical school and was interested in making something of himself. Because he had a job, they could do things that Becky enjoyed. They saw movies, and spent time at his apartment. His friends were always nice to her. It made her feel older to have the attention of the guys Bart hung around with. For a time she felt very important.

Becky had sexual intercourse with Bart three times. She really didn't like it, but because Bart was older he expected it. One night Becky asked Bart if he thought she should get on the pill. He told her it wasn't safe, he knew people who got really sick on the pill. Another time Becky asked Bart what they would do if she were to get pregnant. Bart told her that he would pay for an abortion. Becky

felt sick all over. First of all it was a sin in her religion to have an abortion. Besides that, she was sure that he was going to say they would just get married. She started crying and hitting him. She got all "carried away" as Bart put it. Bart told her that if she was going to be so immature he didn't want anything to do with her. Becky just got more upset - all her fantasies were crushed. She was sure that since Bart was older, he would want to get married if she ever got pregnant. She even had the plans for her wedding written in her diary. That was the last time she ever saw him. He left her off at home and never called her again.

Becky probably got pregnant the first time she had sex. Because she didn't know much about sexuality and pregnancy she wasn't sure she was pregnant at all until she started "getting fat." Mostly when she would wonder about pregnancy, she would wish it wasn't true and try to forget about it. When her mother noticed that she had gained a lot of weight, she promptly took her to a doctor. The doctor told them Becky was about four months pregnant.

Her parents were shocked and surprised. (Becky hadn't even gone out with anyone in three months.) They had no idea that she could be pregnant. She seemed so young. She had just started dating this year. Sam was angry with his wife because he felt that she should have told Becky more about sex. It always had been his job to talk with the boys and Nancy's job to talk with the girls in the family. Both Sam and Nancy used each other for "getting their anger out." Their newly found honeymoon dreams were shot.

Becky was surprised that everyone reacted the way that they did. Nancy called Bart's parents. They wouldn't even talk with her. Bart claimed that the baby wasn't his. Becky was depressed and resentful. Her parents were so mad at each other that they didn't even get too mad at her. Becky was just getting used to having a woman's body and didn't feel comfortable with that, let alone a "fat" woman's body. She wanted someone to at least feel sorry for her. Mostly the reaction from her friends was "you got what you deserved." Her brother told her she was stupid to think someone would marry her. No one talked about the baby.

Sometimes Becky would hear her parents talking in the next room when they thought she was asleep. She could hear them fighting. She felt like everything was her fault. Soon Becky started worrying about what she was going to do. School would be starting for the fall semester, and her baby was coming in just a couple of months. She usually made it to her doctor's appointments and he said everything was fine. Still she was afraid and often imagined that there was something dreadfully wrong with the baby. She hoped that if she had a boy, Bart would be excited and would come back and take her away from all the fighting. She imagined what that would be like, and spent a lot of time practicing what she would say when she called Bart to tell him about the baby.

As the time came for the baby to be born, Becky wondered what she should do about getting a crib, or some things for the baby. She didn't have much money and what she did have she used for cigarettes. She knew that she shouldn't smoke, but she just couldn't quit.

One day her father handed her a pamphlet. It was about the CONNECT Project. He just said, "maybe someone here can help you." Becky carried it around for a couple of days. While she was at the doctor's office, he asked if she was going to childbirth classes, and who would be with her when the baby was born. Her mother had already said that she could never stand to watch it, because the whole thing made her feel sick. Bart sure wasn't going to go, anyway she didn't want Bart to see her if she got upset. She decided to try to call the CONNECT Project. The person who answered the phone told her that she was a former teen parent and was the same age as Becky when her baby was born. She suggested that they could send someone to school to take her out and to get to know her better. She was told there wasn't time for any childbirth classes, but someone with the CONNECT Project would go to the hospital with her, the woman on the phone assured her.

Two days later, Linda called her. They arranged to meet after school. They went to MacDonalds and had a coke. Linda told her that she had her daughter when she was 17, a little older than Becky, but that she had to go to the hospital alone, because then they only let husbands come and she didn't have one. Linda told Becky that they could go out that weekend to some garage sales to find some clothes for the baby. She said that she loved to be there when babies were born. Childbirth was one of the most exciting things in the world for her. Linda talked about the baby as though he or she was a real person. That night when Becky climbed into bed she thought about the kind of parent she would be, and how much she would like her little boy.

Three months later, Linda is still involved with Becky. Becky did have a little boy, but Bart never came to see him. She heard that Bart has another girl pregnant and that he is going to get married. Becky is busy learning all about Stuart. (She picked that name to be a mix of Sam, her father and Bart.) Her dad is starting to pay attention to the baby now and her mother is helping her to fix up a room. Linda has made friends with Nancy too and spends time helping them all to make plans for the baby. Becky dropped out of school but is going to night school next semester. Becky often feels confused about what she should do when Stuart is upset, but she knows that she can call Linda, or get another parent when she feels frustrated. Becky has met another mom her age and they often meet and go for walks or visit each other's houses.

There are still a lot of problems for Becky. Because Becky gets AFDC, the state is taking Bart to court for paternity. He says that he will fight it. Becky says that asking Linda about the questions she has really helps. Linda usually can find out about what really is going on. She has gone to visit the District Attorney with Becky.

The District Attorney didn't think that she was "no good" because she had a baby and was real nice when he asked her questions about Bart. Linda helped to explain why Bart might be claiming that the baby wasn't his, and has provided Becky support during the legal process which really scared Becky.

Becky told Linda she wouldn't have sex again for a long time. She had decided that since she felt that way she would not have any birth control available. Linda supported her in the decision to say no, but was concerned that if Bart came back into her life, Becky would do almost anything to have him back. Linda didn't really want to intrude, but decided that given the second pregnancy statistics, she should talk to Becky about her concerns. Actually, when Linda talked to her, Becky was relieved. Though she did imagine she would have sex, she said she didn't want to so Linda wouldn't be disappointed. When Linda brought it up, Becky made an appointment to see her doctor. Linda was proud of Becky for making a responsible decision to plan ahead; now Becky feels she can be honest with Linda.

Becky is sometimes still frightened and confused, but is starting to meet others with some of the same problems. One night at Parent's Place, Becky talked with another girl whose parents were really angry because they just found out she was pregnant. Becky found herself telling the girl to just "hang in there" because that was exactly how her parents were at first. Linda laughed and told her she was becoming a volunteer too. Maybe some day she will be able to be an official volunteer after she has had some time to get her life in order. For now she will work on getting back to school and raising Stuart.

Adolescent parents report that their experience with volunteers has been helpful and positive. Some indicate that they think they would have been abusive to their children without the volunteer support. Others have stated that hearing other parents talk has really helped them to feel less alone. (See the attached evaluations and responses in the Appendix.)

Sandy, a teen parent who had three children when she began with the program has indicated she probably wouldn't have had more than one child if she had had support for other things in her life.

Sandy's Story

"I had one when I was 15, my second at 16 and my third when I turned 18." Their father didn't want to get married, but also didn't want me to do anything but take care of kids. I had my second one because the first was a girl and we wanted a boy. The third one wasn't really planned, but not an accident either. I guess I thought three kids would <u>really</u> make me a mother and then he would want to get married. I tried to be a super wife and mother, clean house, cook good food, to do all the right things. After the last one was born, we did get married. It lasted three months and now we are getting

divorced. He said he couldn't stand the responsibility...all he had to do was come home and eat dinner. At first I felt so miserable. I thought it would be different if we got married. If I had had someone to talk to then, I could have thought about other things: going back to school, doing something for me. Now, I get to talk to people at CONNECT and I know I'll make it. Sure, things still do go wrong and the kids drive me crazy. But sometimes I listen to other teen parents who are younger and I can really help them by listening. I've been helping to do workshops for CONNECT. It makes me feel important. I really do feel more patient with the kids now. When I don't, I have people to talk with about it."

Many of the CONNECT volunteers were teen parents themselves. Obviously, they have a special interest in adolescent pregnancy and parenting. Some of the volunteers say that their families were so supportive that they want to help others the way their families helped them. Others didn't have such fortunate experience and want to help to provide a different kind of support than they had.

The CONNECT training helps volunteers to develop skills and to establish some basic knowledge about the kinds of situations they might encounter. Resources that are available in the community are also explored. They also have the opportunity to know other volunteers. In effect, they form their own support network, and are able to use each other as consultants.

While CONNECT is linked closely with the other projects of the Family Enhancement Program, the basic support that the teen parents and their family members get from volunteers is simple. The little things that volunteers have been able to help teen parents with have produced large results. Because the CONNECT Project is a prevention program, it has been evaluated by using open ended questions which are asked of the teen parents and their families. The project has changed and been refined, responding to the needs and the desires of teen parents whenever it is possible and reasonable to do so.

The teen parents at CONNECT often participate at Parent's Place South, usually on Thursday evenings. They have literally taken the center over. Generally, the topics which are chosen relate to single parenting, life goals and basic family and child rearing topics. (Some schedules of topics are included in the Appendix.)

The parent centers have substantially enhanced the project. However some of the teen parents never attend the centers and still indicate that their experience with CONNECT has been very helpful.

At CONNECT, participants have the ultimate control. They are able to choose what kind of involvement they will have with the project and how much involvement they want. Sometimes there is a contract with social services and a participant to have a volunteer match or to attend the Parent's Places. This sort of involvement is not encouraged

however. Any records that are kept can be monitored by the participant.

It has seemed beneficial to the success of the program to keep it voluntary. There are no "requirements." Teen parents are not expected to attend parent centers, agree to certain actions or conditions or to meet CONNECT program goals, except in rare situations. The program is individual and determined by the participants.

In order to evaluate the project and to respond to needs as they change, simple records are kept. The number of hours spent with volunteer teen parent matches are tallied. It is necessary to gather information from participants on the value of their match, and their perceptions of their personal growth or change. This information helps to encourage the non-static nature of the program. Evaluations are sometimes written, but often done over the phone by other teen parents and volunteers. This contact has been useful in determining the satisfaction level of the teen parent with regard to his/her match. Additionally, feedback is gathered from volunteers to make sure that the match is good for them too.

Sometimes when a teen parent is referred, they are reluctant to have any involvement. There is an automatic mailing of the newsletter so that they will be able to see what is going on at CONNECT and what is available for them in the community. Often the newsletter helps them to make contact when they have had some crisis or need some kind of help. From time to time the newsletter has a journal piece from a teen parent. Letters and articles sent in by others often enable parents to have some sense of identification with participants even though there is little personal contact.

According to participant response, as a prevention project, in the generic sense, CONNECT has been successful. At the end of the first year, it was noticed that none of the teen parents who had been matched with volunteers or who were attending the Parent's Places had become pregnant again. At the end of the second year still no one had become pregnant. This was an exciting result of the prevention efforts.

Now more intentionally, volunteers are helped to practice discussing birth control with adolescent parents. Sometimes just mentioning it gives the teens the opportunity to ask questions or to ask physicians for birth control assistance. Volunteers also do not assume that a teen is sexually active just because they have a baby. Volunteers have become sensitive to the differences in values and life styles of the many teen parents involved in the project.

An awareness of the dreadful statistics which confront teen parents has necessitated directness, both in the volunteer training and in the relationship of the volunteer to a teen match in the acknowledgement of the grim realities of adolescent parenthood.

"Beating the Odds" has become sort of a motto for many of CONNECT teen parents. By looking at their odds realistically CONNECT has been able to address the issues which are common to so many of them.

Those topics which are usually approached with teen parents are:

Child abuse and parental stress - Along the line, when it seems appropriate, many volunteers indicate to teen parents their own frustration with kids. Something like: "I remember being so tired when my baby was waking up all the time during the night. I couldn't believe how angry I could feel at the little guy." or "When my child was at the stage of pulling everything off shelves sometimes I would get so mad I would be scared that I would kick him." or "I couldn't believe that I could feel so angry at someone that I loved so much. I decided real early that I could never spank him, because I was afraid that if I did I would lose control and hurt him. Once or twice I have hit him, and I'm real glad that I made that rule for myself, because I can get so mad, especially when I am upset about something else." By sharing a personal experience that is a real "human" one, volunteers can enable the adolescent parent to open up, and to share their real concerns.

The volunteer might also offer some alternatives:

"When I tried everything with Danny, feeding, rocking, changing him and walking around with him, and he still was crying, I sometimes would decide that I needed some caring for. I would put him in his bed and go and put on a record that I really liked and relax for five minutes before I would try something else. Sometimes he was asleep by the time I came back into his room."

"When I feel real upset with the kids, I just call my neighbor to come over for ten minutes so that I can run around the block a couple of times."

"I couldn't get through a day without the chance to exercise and relax for five minutes before I have to get the kids up and ready for school. I really like my time alone in the morning."

"During naptimes, I try to have at least two days of the week be time for me. I take a bath, listen to the radio and have a cup of special tea."

These alternatives not only help to start discussions, but model the "humanness" of the volunteer. It is important for teen parents not to hide their frustrations from the volunteer. Some teen parents run themselves crazy trying to prove that they won't be the ones to have trouble with being a parent. It is a great feeling when they discover that there is probably no parent in the world who doesn't have a few problems with their children!

Depression - If a teen parent is really dealing with the realities of their situation, it is likely that they will be depressed some of the time. The suicide rate for teen parents is much higher than that of normal teens. Since adolescence is so difficult anyway, it is important that when the teen parent is feeling depressed, there is someplace for them to turn. Getting to know the young parent is the key for this. A volunteer who is worried about the mental condition of their match has information from training on how to talk with a suicidal person. Volunteers also have resources available to get immediate help and assistance, in the case of a severe depression.

Planning for the future - Talking with teen parents about their own personal lives outside of being a parent is important. Depending on the differences of the teen, their own personal strengths are reinforced. If a teen has a special talent, the volunteer will help them find ways to use it. Helping them to imagine long range goals has been important.

Modeling adult behaviors - One of the most valuable roles that a volunteer can play is to be themselves. The volunteers at CONNECT spend a lot of time working on their own values, what their strengths are and looking at their own lives. Sharing themselves with other people, especially with teen parents is the special gift that they bring to the program. A willingness to let someone really get to know them and to spend time getting to know their match is an instrumental component of the program. The coordinators of the project need to model this as they care for the volunteers and pay attention to their needs too. Being able to say "no" is an important lesson too. When it is necessary, volunteers are encouraged to say "no" to their match and to say "no" to the coordinators of the project.

A Volunteer Says "No!" - Allen's Story

One of the early matches at CONNECT was with a teenage father. His mother, Sally, had taken the volunteer training in the first session and was just about to finish when she indicated her concern for her son. Allen was married at 17 and his son, Jeff was born when he was 18. Sally and her family had needed to "let go," because Allen had previously been drug dependent, and they, through family therapy, had learned that he needed to take responsibility for himself. He also was completely alienated from his father, who refused to see him.

Sally was concerned because Allen was laid off from his job, and his wife had just left him after taking almost everything out of their apartment. His wife wanted to leave the three month old baby with Allen while she went on a trip with her new boyfriend. Allen was afraid that he would never see his son again if he didn't keep him while she went on the trip. Sally wanted to help, but was worried that her husband would never stand for it, and that she would reinforce the old family problems they had just started to correct.

Dan shared Sally's concerns. Dan was a former teen parent, and also the father of a teen parent. Dan had just completed the training too and found himself suggesting that the tension might be eased if Allen and the baby stayed with him for a couple of days, until Allen could get some practice at baby care.

Dan knew all too well about the tension of a parent and an adolescent. However, he knew supporting someone else's child would be much different and easier than dealing with his own. Arrangements for a meeting were made. Allen and Dan got along well, and he and the baby stayed at Dan's for a couple of weeks. During that time, Dan's wife made sure that she didn't take over. Dan spent time with Allen, giving lessons on bathing, formula fixing and sharing his experiences with his own children. Allen really needed help, and got non-judgmental assistance from Dan who himself had once been in a similar situation.

During the next year, Dan had several calls from Allen. Sometimes Allen would call and want some support. Other times he called to offer to help Dan with a project. For a couple of weeks, Allen helped Dan and his wife by providing child care after school for their three school-aged children. Allen soon started visiting his own parent's home with the baby. His father was surprised to see that Allen had good parenting skills. Allen's father really respected the fact that Allen was showing responsibility in providing for the physical needs of his child. Finally they were able to establish a new relationship, aided by the diversion of the new baby that they both loved.

Allen sometimes makes unreasonable demands on Dan. Dan has learned to say "no" to Allen. He will not "rescue him" if he has been drinking and wants to be saved. One time Allen ended up in jail when he had been drinking. Dan refused to bail him out, letting him sober up in jail instead. Finally it seemed that the relationship had run its natural course and there was little contact. Allen is really making it on his own now. He has a job, an apartment and often has visitation with his son. He is now divorced and has joint custody. He is comfortable with his son, and is an active father.

Though Dan occasionally talks with Allen on the phone, he really felt like pulling back from him when it was time to enable him to continue on in his growth and development. While Dan may have temporarily taken the place of the father that Allen needed, his relationship did not "take over." Allen has a good relationship with his father. Dan hopes that in the future, Allen and he can be friends, without letting a dependency resume. Dan's caring helped Allen to avoid a crisis, to care for his son, and to move forward in his own personal growth.

The CONNECT experience has been positive for a variety of reasons. The funding for the project pays for a half-time facilitator who helps to make matches, trains and supports volunteers and promotes community linkages. With only a half-time staff, more than 3,000 hours of direct contact time for teen parents was donated in CONNECT's second year.

CONNECT has helped Becky, Allen and Sandy and many other young parents. The project has created a supportive environment for teen parents and a positive response to their needs from the community through the work of both participants and volunteers.

Note: The stories of Becky, Allen and Sandy are real, but minor details and names have been changed.

CHAPTER 4

WHY ARE YOU CONCERNED?

Exploring Your Motivations and Values

WHY ARE YOU CONCERNED?

Personal Interests and Motivations

Usually people who are willing to dedicate time to a project have some personal concerns or experience with an issue. Why are you interested in adolescent pregnancy and parenthood?

Take a moment and think about why you care. Were you a teen parent? Do you know some adolescent parents who seem to need help and support? Are you a parent who knows how hard taking care of kids can be and wants to help others who may not have the kind of support that you do? Are you interested in this topic because of your work as a teacher, minister or someone who is interested in adolescents? Have you read articles or seen television programs on adolescent pregnancy?

The following exercise may help you to focus some of your thoughts on why you are interested in working with adolescent parents.

Exercise - Why are you concerned?

1. Make a list of the reasons why you are interested in adolescent parents.

   Write down as many reasons as you can think of in ten minutes or less.

2. Now star three of the reasons which are most important.

3. Circle the ones that are life experience related. (Especially meaningful in your own life.)

4. Now look at your list again. Are some of the starred items ones that are also circled?

Items For Thought

Let yourself imagine why you would want to help a 9th grader who is taking care of her baby and going to school.

Why would you want to help a junior in high school who just learned that he was going to be a father?

In both of these situations, what can you imagine yourself doing or saying? What needs might they have which you imagine your support might make easier?

Suggestions For Use:

If you are working by yourself, add this information to your notebook. This list will aid you in staying "on task" and helping you to proceed with your planning in an deliberate way. The thinking through of some of these issues will assist you in presenting your concerns

and issues to others.

If you are working with others, you do not need to share all of the information on your list, but use it as a format for discussion. Share some of the reasons you are interested in this topic with the others working with you. Do you all have the same kinds of reasons? Use the items for thought for a brief discussion on some of the needs of teenagers who are pregnant or who are parents.

Self Screening Exercise - (In the Appendix)

Set aside at least 45 minutes to do this exercise. Spend only ten minutes or so on the portion which is number scaled. (This portion is usually used for human service workers to help them assess their abilities and qualities in human relationships and communication skills.) When doing the rest of the exercise, you can make personal notes or use a tape recorder to chronicle your thoughts.

Items for Thought

Do you find that your personal judgements are in conflict with the goal of supporting teenage parents? Do you see any potential problems with any of the areas addressed in this exercise? What do you think that your strengths are? What are your weaknesses?

Suggestions for use:

If you are working alone, find someone to talk with who is known to be non-judgemental (i.e., a school counselor who is thought of as "fair" to adolescents, a trusted friend, a minister who is a good listener or problem solver.) You do not need to reveal the every detail of your Self Screening Exercise. Share results which surprised you, or choose some of the open ended questions to discuss.

If you are working with others, share your general impressions of the skills which are necessary to work with teen parents. You do not need to share personal or specific information about your self screening exercise. Use this form for a vehicle for topics for discussion with the others you are working with.

This Self Screening Exercise has been used by the CONNECT Project for helping people who call about being volunteers before the training begins. It helps potential volunteers to sort out whether or not they are really interested in working with the project and want to take the time to explore the possibility of volunteering further. This tool has been helpful in determining personal prejudices and values as well as assessing individual helping skills.

The Self Screening Exercise does not specifically aim to eliminate people from working on the project because they have a certain set of values or judgements. (All of us have our own values and "rules for living." We don't want people to get rid of their

own values!) However, because of the situations which will undoubtably be encountered while working with teen parents, it is essential to have personal values and issues sorted out before embarking on developing and conducting a project to assist them.

The Importance of Personal Values

Research and experience have shown us that people and programs which work best with a diversity of families and individuals are non-judgmental about other's cultures, customs and values. When working with others with different values, it is important for you to maintain the things which are important to you while you help support others within the context and realm of their own values. Of course values are not constant things and do change. It is likely that things which are important to you have significantly changed during your own life. Adolescents too change rapidly, and are at the stage when reassessing values is instrumental to their development. The changing of values cannot be done by someone else to someone else. When there are clear differences of values, it will be up to you to deliver the program goals without the judgment of your personal values. (See CHANGE WISDOM Appendix.)

Perhaps the following examples will help you to imagine the conflicting values which may result when working with teen parents.

Examples:

- You have strong negative feelings about abortion. Eventually, in your work with adolescent parents, you will encounter teen parents who have had abortions. How do you respond?

- You are opposed to abortion for any reason. A teen who is pregnant decides to terminate the pregnancy and tells you about it. What do you say?

- You feel as if teens should never have babies, and that if faced with a pregnancy, should have an abortion. Can you support the teen parents with whom you work?

- You feel adoption is the best choice for all teens...(too many people who are "ready" are waiting for babies.) Everyday you work with teens who are struggling to make ends meet and to gather the patience to go on with their children. What is your reaction?

These are among the most difficult of issues you will encounter while working with teen parents. Many of the people who work with teen parents feel strongly one way or another about the issues above. Some people feel strongly one way for themselves and another way for their own family and another for a stranger.

Examples:

- You feel as if all teens are too young to get married. In your

community almost all of the girls who get pregnant get married. What is your reaction?

- You feel that it is morally wrong for anyone to have sexual relations before marriage. How do you deal with your desire to work with teenaged parents, most of whom have been sexually active before marriage?
- You think that sex out of wedlock is wrong. How do you relate to someone who is 17 and sleeps with two different men while she is married to neither?
- You think that sexual relationships are an individual's decision, yet the teen parent you work with is chastised by her own parents and feels guilty herself for having sexual relations with her boyfriend. What do you say?

Some more difficult examples. Having any of these feelings and personal values need not directly affect your work with teen parents. We have found that strong feelings without the willingness to be careful about the judgments placed on other's values will be detrimental to your ability to work with teen parents. A careful self-assessment of your values and your desire to work on teen parent's concerns will be necessary for your program to be successful. Will you be able to support those who may be very different from you? At the very least, will you be able to help them find the care and support from someone else who is able to assist them?

Use the group, or someone you trust to assist you in sorting out the problems that you may have with the Self Screening Exercise. If you feel unable to separate the values which may negatively affect your work, you will need to enlist the help of others who share your basic concerns for teen parents. If you feel you will be able to agree that teen parents need to have support in order to help themselves despite your personal judgements...go ahead.

It is OK to have your own personal agenda for working with teen parents and starting a project. You may be interested in learning about human services by volunteering. You may be bored and need something which will give your energies a positive direction. You may know that a successful program will help the public acceptance of the agency for which you work. You may be concerned about your own professional development. You might wish that a program existed because your own child is pregnant or will be a father. Some of the very best programs exist because of the personal interests of people who have worked on a project.

This chapter has probably given you some greater sense of why you are personally interested in the issue of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. Perhaps it has helped you get some of your thoughts and feelings down on paper. Remember to use this information as you move ahead in the process of working out your own project. Often you will need to reflect on the reasons why you started your work.

Look back on year early thoughts when the "going gets rough." Use the information to explain to others why a project is needed. Suggest this process with others who join you in your work. People who are working on your programmatic values and goals may find it useful to reflect back on the issues and values which are most important to them individually. Being aware of the values which are important to your co-workers will enable you to avoid conflict and to have a greater understanding of the motives of all of those involved. Assisting teen parents in ways which respect their values and goals will be easier once you have clarified your own.

CHAPTER 5

WORKING WITH TEENAGE PARENTS AND FAMILIES

A PREVENTION PROGRAM MODEL

A PREVENTION PROGRAM MODEL

A Word About Prevention

Some programs for teenaged parents operate in a treatment or an intervention mode. In some cases these programs have been very successful, but are directed by professionals and trained people who are skilled in treatment and intervention.

With some training, almost all people have the capacity to participate in providing prevention strategies to others. In our daily lives, prevention is always present. We are best acquainted with prevention through doing things (taking care of needs) to prevent breakdown or disaster (or problems). For example - preventive maintenance on a car - changing the oil, getting a tune-up, checking the battery; fire prevention - avoiding hazards which are likely to create fires - frayed light cords, piles of flammable materials, open fires on a windy day; health maintenance - exercise, diet, dental check-ups, brushing teeth.

Prevention is by far the cheapest way of providing human services. It is also the easiest. Most people respond well to preventative assistance and are less reluctant to participate in non-intrusive programs in which they are in charge. A prevention approach enables participants to be among those who are helped and "helper" in a mutual exchange with others.

Teen parents respond well to prevention approaches. These are some of the advantages in using a preventive approach with teen parents:

- accepts them where they are in their life right now - and helps to move them ahead
- helps them to plan for the future
- teaches skills and strategies which permeate into the rest of their lives
- lets them have control of their involvement in the program
- assists in developing individual supportive networks
- is individual and adaptable addressing needs which are current
- involves them in the community and reduces isolation.

When you are working in a prevention mode (as opposed to an intervention or treatment mode) you will be thinking differently than most social service or human service programs think. The notion of using prevention strategies for working with people at risk, or even with the general population is relatively new. The concept of working in a prevention mode works well with the use of volunteers and networks of individuals.

A PREVENTION MODEL - HOW TO USE IT TO START YOUR OWN PROJECT

This handbook is intended to enable you to facilitate the start of a volunteer based program which will provide support for teenage parents. Your philosophy will be important in setting your goals and providing your services.

The Family Enhancement Program is a prevention program which has a philosophy which is well grounded in agreed upon values and goals. Because CONNECT was started under the same principles as the Family Enhancement Program operates under, it was fairly simple to come up with some basic beliefs which guide the project for teen parents.

These basic "guiding principles" have enabled the development of a program which avoids some of the problems which other kinds of programs grapple with as they attempt to work with a group of adolescents which in many situations have been "hard to reach."

Many programs for teen parents have been unsuccessful in part because they attempt to work within a traditional social services mode. This is sometimes referred to as the Medical Model. The words of T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. found in the article written for a publication during The Year of the Young Child, will help explain:

> "Rather than simply set up educational opportunities for parenting, or advice-giving groups, we need to give young parents the feeling that they are important, that they have choices and can make them appropriately. In other words, we must provide them with advocates who want to help them bring out their own best assets. When parents feel good about themselves, they can pass on a good self-image to the baby. By the same token, when parents feel 'put down' inadequate and angrily defensive, all of these feelings are passed on to the new infant and become a basic part of the infant's feelings about self and society."
>
> "We must give up our pathological medical model of looking for people's weaknesses and ignoring their strengths. Our missionary efforts and 'help' for high risk or underprivileged people can be an example of such destructive chauvinism. Few people can tolerate our pathological eyes, which are so expert at recognizing their weaknesses, but ineffective in recognizing and backing up their strengths..."

The problem with the traditional mode is that it often sets up a situation where the professional is the one who is "right" and where the client is the one who needs changing, and is therefore "wrong." This situation often sets up a climate which excludes someone who may need help because of the approach that is used. In particular, adolescents need approaches which do not attempt to rob them of their need for increasing independence. This is even more important for a teen parent who has responsibilities which are unusual for adolescents

their age. Certainly a program for teen parents will want to reinforce the necessity of responsibly caring for themselves and for their children.

The goals and philosophy of Family Enhancement will assist you in understanding how CONNECT works. This philosophy may also assist you in developing an approach to starting a program in your own community.

THE FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

AGENCY GOALS

I. To enable people to help themselves and one another.

II. To facilitate the development and strengthening of support networks among individuals and families.

III. To facilitate cooperative networking among agencies concerned with family life.

IV. To stimulate a public climate supportive of family life.

V. To build on the strengths that exist in widely diverse family styles.

THE FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Beliefs and Values

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT believes: No family is whole in itself. The rest of the family consists of a community or a group of caring people : helping professionals, good friends and neighbors, grandparents, child care workers. A caring community can build on the strengths of children, adults and families. Instead of focusing on problems, a caring community seeks to prevent problems by focusing on the needs of all its members.

The use of networks or support systems is another basic value of the Family Enhancement Program. Network and support system concepts are valued both at a personal level and organizationally. These concepts are based on several assumptions:

- People's natural helping systems include their neighbors and friends as well as close relatives.
- The support that natural helping systems give people and families is usually reciprocal and is given by one human being to another.

- As much as 90% of the support people and families get is from their natural helping systems.
- Intentional helping systems can be established that will strengthen natural helping systems.
- Social service agencies can operate in a different mode so as to empower people and help them strengthen their natural helping systems.
- By becoming more aware and intentional about their natural helping systems, people can strengthen them.
- Organizations need support systems, and there is potential to build them. Intentionally practicing networking at the organizational level means that an organization values and practices:

  Cooperation: we can achieve more of what we want to do by working together--not duplicating efforts unnecessarily--finding ways for all to succeed.

  Resource sharing: we get farther in the long run if we share what is available - we learn from each other - we find more resources by sharing and passing things on.

- In order to help people develop prevention and wellness strategies for themselves, organizations need to practice these same strategies internally and organizationally.
- A social network includes the nuclear family and the support system of every member. It also includes the friends, neighbors, work associates, and significant helpers from churches, schools, social agencies, and institutions who are willing and able to take the risk of involvement. Involvement includes social and emotional support in both the joys and stresses of daily living.

THE FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

FAMILY WELLNESS

A. Wellness in a family is different from wellness in an individual.

An individual member of a family might be practicing wellness yet the family as a "system" might not be "well." Wellness in a family is much more complex, and has a great deal to do with ways of interacting as well as with physical health. The "wellness" level in a family exists mostly in the ties or relationships between people.

B. Some components of wellness in a family are:

(1) Individual bodily wellness of all members
- good nutrition
- appropriate physical activity
- prevention of physical illness

(2) Community building - a balance of independence ("I am responsible for myself.") and interdependence("We are responsible for one another.") This balance may vary in different families and will shift over time. The family determines together how they will practice wellness.

(3) Growth - each person, and also the family group is moving towards some greater growth, self-actualization, and participation in a more "abundant life." (i.e., "rich in friends," or "rich in emotional, spiritual, interpersonal, intellectual, or physical experiences.")

C. Skills that contribute to family wellness are:

(1) Non-threatening communication - active listening; "I" messages; ability to validate others and accept validations from others; non-verbal communication skills.

(2) Awareness - of self, of other family members, and of the process of family interactions.

(3) Support - encouraging other family members in efforts toward growth, change, self-actualization, etc.

(4) Decision-making - appropriate use of power or authority over others; use of personal power by each individual family member; ways to establish rules and values.

(5) Stress reduction - a well family recognizes stress and deals with it. All families will have stress and problems. A family that is wellness oriented will seek to improve such situations.

General ideas - No family is always strong in all "wellness" areas. Family wellness is a frame of mind, a quality of living, a process. It is not a static condition.

THE FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

HEALTH ENHANCEMENT MODEL

One basic value of the Family Enhancement Program is health enhancement. This value is based on several assumptions:

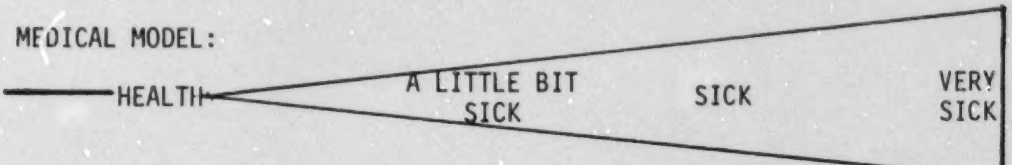
- People are basically very strong and their natural inclination is towards self actualization.
- We as individuals can choose what is best for us when we are aware of a variety of options.
- People are best able to enhance their own or family's health in a climate where there is strong personal support, giving and getting as equals, emotional support.
- People are able to learn skills from others which will enable them to contribute as well as to receive support from a natural helping system (i.e., communication skills, listening skills, feedback skills, facilitation skills useful in groups, work and family situations.)

Health enhancement depends on peers, family and friends operating together in a caring environment. When there is caring, there is less need for curing.

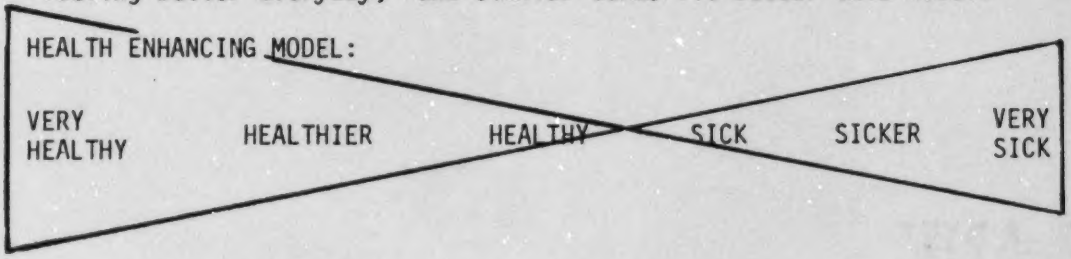
TO ENHANCE means: to raise in degree, heighten, intensify...to raise in or increase in value, importance, attractiveness.

HEALTH means: "whole or sound" not just the absence of disease. The medical model for health may stress this absence:

MEDICAL MODEL:



HEALTH ENHANCING MODEL: health no longer is a straight line...but a growing form. "Bursting with health," "living on the growing edge," "feeling better everyday," and similar terms fit better this model:



CHAPTER 6

USING VOLUNTEERS

Providing support in creative ways.

USING VOLUNTEERS WITH TEEN PARENTS

"When I met her, I knew I wasn't really all alone. She was proof, living proof that I could 'make it'."

"When I told her about my faults, she never said 'shame on you'."

"She gave me the strength to get through the first awful months..."

"I can call her, and she seems glad to hear from me."

"She likes the baby so much. She helps me see how special he is."

- Comments from teen moms about their volunteer matches.

The use of volunteers is a largely untapped resource. There is also a growing knowledge that with the experience to back it up, volunteerism is effective both financially and programmatically.

There are distinct advantages to using volunteers in programs for teen parents. The CONNECT experience with volunteers convinced many that volunteers provide the "best" individual and non-threatening support to teen parents. This does not dismiss the help which a caring professional can give to a teen parent. Some teens do need social worker's involvement for direction or counselling - but not all do.

Some teens need the kind of attention that only a volunteer can provide. Many young parents need relationships with older people who can provide a variety of supports - when they need it - and where they need it.

The reports from programs all over the country that match teen parents with volunteers are glowing. Many of these programs match former teen parents with current teen parents. Others use mothers and fathers who just want to lend their support.

Advantages for participant teen parents in volunteer programs include:

- The participants in the program are encouraged to become part of the community, not necessarily separated because they have special needs.
- Participants have more power, are <u>enabled</u> to change rather than

face being changed by a specified "goal for a client."
- Participants are enabled to become part of a reciprocal helping relationship.
- Teens can become volunteers and participants at the same time.
- Many volunteers indicate that the opportunity to help someone else has enabled them to help themselves.
- A volunteer program enables people to move away from a dependency upon a program: developing their own supportive networks.
- Volunteers who have had similar experiences as the teen parents are likely to win the adolescent's trust.
- Adolescents respond well to volunteers who "choose" to work with them. (Sometimes it is important to know that the person who is working with you wants to, isn't getting paid, and doesn't have to have a relationship. Someone who is just interested without any other motive, can help in increasing someone's sense of self esteem.)

Advantages for programs which use volunteers include:

- Program stays grounded in the community and doesn't get entangled into a large bureaucracy.
- Program is well supported by people in the community, basically because of the diversity of those who are already involved in the project.
- The participants have varying roles in the program: encouraging supporters, assisting in the planning and advising the people who primarily assist with the delivery of service, and in making changes when necessary.
- The success of the program belongs to many. Burn-out and danger from cuts in funding are reduced.
- There is a cycle of people through the program which enables those who have been helped to help others. This eliminates the need for huge volunteer recruiting efforts.
- The wealth of many volunteers allows the program to take advantage of a variety of skills, talents and interests.

There are a variety of strategies which have been found to be useful in working with volunteers. Among them are :

. providing meaningful work
. recognition
. motivating/maintaining interest
. avoiding burn-out
. assuring that the volunteer has an effective network of support.

The diversity of a volunteer corps can be enormous - a spanish speaker - a lawyer - a childbirth coach - an auto-mechanic - males and females. This diversity will enable different needs to be met in better ways.

Using volunteers strengthens not only individual teen parents, but the whole community. Young people who learn to help themselves will also learn to help others.

CHAPTER 7

GETTING STARTED AND MOVING ALONG

A process for building your project.

GETTING STARTED AND MOVING ALONG

The Importance of Process

The quality of the program which you develop will be influenced positively or negatively by the process you use while you are building it. The level of community involvement will be determined by the ways in which you use the community in the planning. The philosophy and goals and therefore the methods which are used will be decided upon, at least initially, during the planning process of your project. The total project will be the result of not only what you do, but of how you do it.

A facilitative process rather than a directive process is described in this chapter. While a certain individual may initiate the first steps of a project, the facilitative process encourages responsibility and ownership which will be shared by all who help in the planning. Eventually in the ideal situation, the ownership of the project will be adopted by the greater community with major portion of the ownership in the hands of the participants and the volunteers. In other words, a community based prevention project maintains its direction, responsibility and focus through the participants and the volunteers who make it work.

The following flow charts and the narrative descriptions will walk you and your group through a process. Your vague idea, wish or dream can become a reality: a program which responds to the needs of teenage parents through a functioning and energetic project.

This process has been developed over quite a long time. It calls upon the experience of many groups and programs. Many of the suggestions and hints will be useful to you. Other ideas you may choose not to use because they won't fit your individual situation. In general, however, it is better not to push ahead too fast without giving each step consideration. Often the first seemingly insignificant "little steps" can make a big difference in your process and in your final project. You are encouraged to fully develop the project at each of the planning stages and to encourage others to think through each step before moving ahead as well.

Hints To Get You Started

It is recommended that you read the whole handbook before you start on any part of the process. Re-read the process sections and study the flow chart.

Much of the listing, brainstorming and idea generating will be done in a group. It is useful to use large sheets of newsprint and markers for this sort of group work. This enables everyone to see what has been done, and what needs to be done. After the meeting, the infor-

mation can be collected into notes and copied for all members of the planning group to use.

Keeping a Notebook

One of the most useful and highly recommended methods of keeping track of your work is the use of a notebook. Journaling your activities and thoughts will enable you to keep organized as you work through your own process of starting a project for adolescent parents.

You may wish to keep two separate notebooks. One might be a record of your personal thoughts and feelings about the project and the other might contain programmatic information.

Using a simple three ring binder is preferable over using a spiral notebook. A three ring binder will enable you to put pages in at will without the tedious task of copying everything into it.

These are some of the advantages of keeping a notebook or activity journal:

- You will have a tool for keeping in touch with the original needs, and reasons for starting your project.
- You will avoid recreating information for your project over and over again.
- You will have documentation of the community input which has been collected for the project.
- You will have a record of the people and ideas which have enabled you to plan your project which responds to your own community's needs.
- You will have chronicled information which will enable you to see the progress that you have made. (Especially useful if you should feel that your progress seems too slow.)
- You will have written information available for people who are new to the project, so that they will have a sense of history which will enable them to more fully understand your existing project.
- You will have written information on why you made decisions and how those decisions were reached.
- You will facilitate the continuation of the project even if you choose to discontinue or are unable to continue to facilitate the project.

PROCESS FOR BUILDING PROJECT

I. STATE OVER-ALL GOALS IN ONE SENTENCE

↓

II. EXAMINE YOUR MOTIVES FOR INVOLVEMENT

↓

III. FORM SUPPORT GROUP OR CORE GROUP

↓

IV. CHOOSE FACILITATOR OR CO-FACILITATORS

↓

V. DETERMINE COMMUNITY NEEDS
GATHER LARGER GROUP OF PEOPLE
CONDUCT ASSESSMENT
ASSESS RESOURCES AVAILABLE

↓

VI. FORM STUDY AND RESEARCH GROUP

↓

VII. DEVELOP PHILOSOPHY, ASSUMPTION STATEMENTS

↓

VIII. DEVELOP TRAINING
CONDUCT TRAINING
RECRUIT, SCREEN, SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

↓

X. RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

STEP I.

Developing One Sentence Goals

First of all, state the goal of your process:

Examples:

- To develop a program for teen parents using volunteers;
- To build a volunteer program which will help teenaged parents and their families;
- To help the community to support voluntary efforts in assisting adolescent parents.

Then come up with a more detailed one sentence goal for the project:

Examples:

- To enable teen parents to develop their skills and obtain information on child management and family living.
- To provide teen parents the opportunity to help themselves and each other.
- To promote relief from isolation and to provide support for teen parents.

If you are already working with a group of people, have each person do this step and see if there is agreement on what the over-all goals are. Because this step in the process is meant only to start you off with some similar goals, it is not absolutely necessary that you all write down the same thing. It is essential however, that all of you have the same general intentions in mind as you start your work. Your group goals and community needs will become clear as you proceed in the process, so don't spend much time concerning yourself with absolute agreement.

STEP II.

Examine Your Motives for Involvement

Use the section of this handbook - "Why Do You Want to be Involved."

It may be that in your group you will want to wait until the core group is established and do this portion all together. If there is not a ready core group and you are still working alone, then you will want to do this section now. It will assist you in going ahead with your work.

If you are the facilitator because you are the person who is starting this effort, it will be important for you to have sorted through some of the basic ideas of the project you hope to start on your own. Consider yourself a sales person who needs to get some customers. Know your product! When you have developed a way to express your concerns you will be able to get others to join you more easily.

STEP III.

Form Core Group

Generally it is better to have a few dedicated people working on a project rather than a large relatively uncommitted group. Right now you may be working on this idea alone. Soon you will want to have two or three other people to join you in the early work of the project, becoming the core group.

Ultimately you will want to generate the support of the larger community. Keep this in mind when you ask people to join you. Do you have more connections by including specific people? Do you have people with an interest in the topic who can share their personal concerns with others? Does your core group have representatives of various sectors of your community? Do you have representation from people who will be participants in the project? Are there people who will be among your first volunteers working with adolescent parents?

Your core group will be instrumental in determining the fate of your efforts. Their input will determine the philosophy, goals and the methods which are essential to the center of your ideas. This is a crucial step in the process.

Who Can You Get To Join You?

In looking for key people to serve on your core group it would be a good idea to start with people you already know. Parents of teens, friends from church, people who all ready work with adolescents, either as paid professionals or volunteers are good resources. Choose people who are willing to take part in the process as equals; it will not help you if someone comes in and tells you how you should do it. In fact, a well meaning expert could be very disruptive to your work.

If you need to go to other groups or agencies to find members of the core group, here are places to consider:

Parents Groups (at schools, churches or social clubs)
Members of Service Clubs, or Business Clubs
YMCA's, Scouts, or other youth related services or agencies
Local high school, or clinics, churches, or other community organizations.

When you approach people to plan with you, be specific about what you want. Do you want their input and opinions? Do you need their knowledge of adolescent issues? Do they know the community networks which you will need to develop? What kind of time commitment and work commitment will you anticipate being necessary when you contact potential planners. You might want to ask them to attend one or two meetings at first. Then you may decide to see if they are still interested and whether they will want to continue with the core group as a member or agree to assist the group in some way. Even if their involvement does not extend through to the completion of the planning, diverse interests may be a valuable resource for your project or some other points in your

process.

Community development assistance or other professionals may be available on loan from the Community Action Commission, an Ecumenical or other religious or action group, interested in social concerns. Local public health departments or the local social services department may also be useful in lending their expertise.

You will want to make sure that people feel they aren't wasting their time by being part of your process; plan your meetings carefully. Be organized.

STEP IV.

Facilitator

The idea and thus the responsibility for starting a group to plan a project will start with one or two people. This person(s), for a time at least will probably be filling the role of facilitator. An existing group or a staff may have someone delegated to be the facilitator. Or it may be that a facilitator will need to be chosen. This position will not necessarily have to be filled by one person, or the same person all the time. The job of facilitation may be rotated sucessfully if the planning group is in agreement about following a specific process.

If you are the facilitator of the project, you will want to consider what your responsibilities are. The dictionary definition of facilitate is to "make easier or less difficult; to help forward." The Center for Conflict Resolution's A Manual for Group Facilitators indicates that the facilitator's role is to: "Make groups perform more effectively by soliciting the leadership skills and potential of all members." Others who have been part of planning groups explain the role this way: "Knits together, makes connections between others, helps others to be aware of what they want to do, makes them aware of their options." "Makes things more fluid, easier."

In the process, which is encouraged in this handbook,the facilitator needs to enable others to share their own leadership skills and resources. The facilitator needs to enable the group to do their work by taking care of the mechanics and details which will let the process work. These tasks may include: planning meeting times and places, writing and sending out notices of meetings, planning agendas, checking back with people who have assignments, starting and finishing meetings and being a contact person for the group. It is not necessary that the facilitator do all these things, but that he/she makes sure they get done.

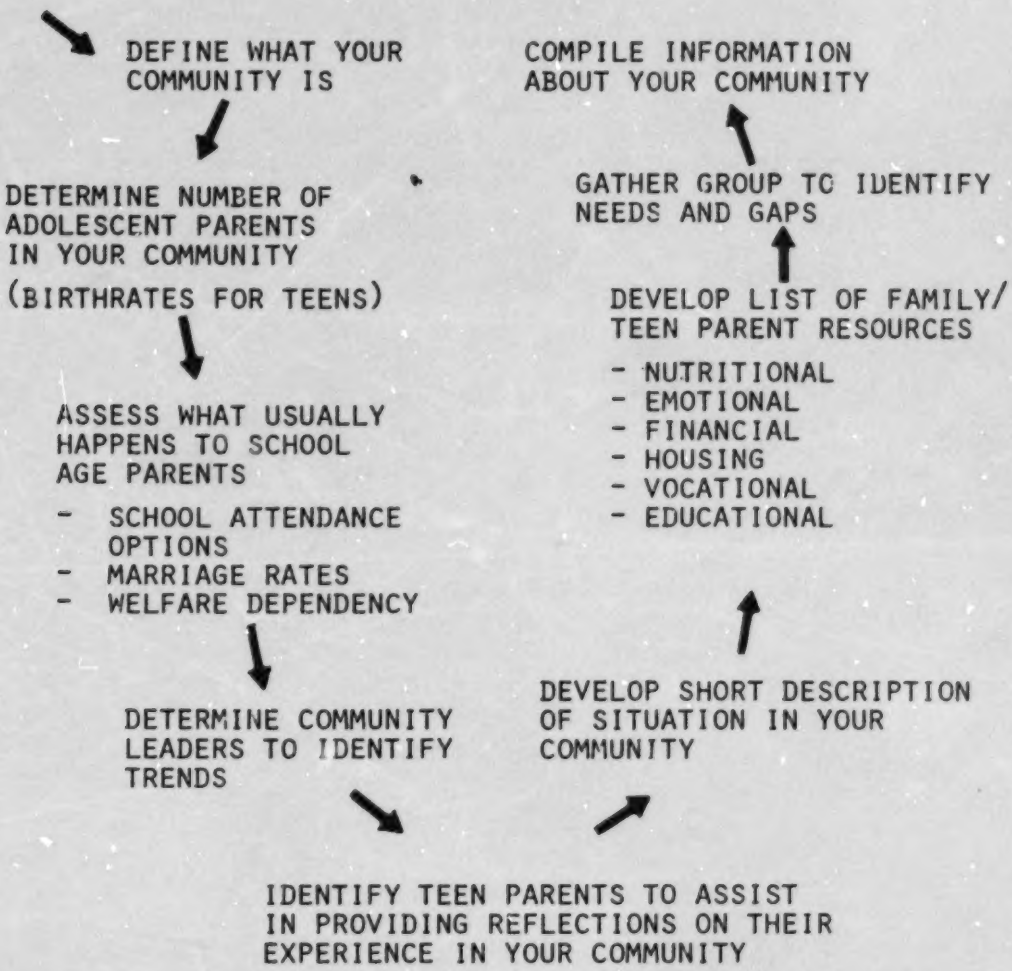
The facilitator's role is essential to the functioning of the group. Someone who is committed to the goal of the process and to the goal of the project should be selected as facilitator. Generally a "natural" for the job will stand out, so the selection of a facilitator is not usually difficult. It's also OK for the facilitators to be designated before the process starts. This is likely to happen when one or two people are spearheading the effort. If this is the case, by all means, let them

continue. Their enthusiasm is essential!

There are several good publications on facilitation. You may find that facilitator training is offered in your community. Some suggested books are in the Bibliography.

STEP 5

DETERMINING COMMUNITY NEEDS


DEFINE WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY IS
DETERMINE NUMBER OF ADOLESCENT PARENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY
(BIRTHRATES FOR TEENS)
ASSESS WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS TO SCHOOL AGE PARENTS
- SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OPTIONS
- MARRIAGE RATES
- WELFARE DEPENDENCY
DETERMINE COMMUNITY LEADERS TO IDENTIFY TRENDS
IDENTIFY TEEN PARENTS TO ASSIST IN PROVIDING REFLECTIONS ON THEIR EXPERIENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY
DEVELOP SHORT DESCRIPTION OF SITUATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY
DEVELOP LIST OF FAMILY/ TEEN PARENT RESOURCES
- NUTRITIONAL
- EMOTIONAL
- FINANCIAL
- HOUSING
- VOCATIONAL
- EDUCATIONAL
GATHER GROUP TO IDENTIFY NEEDS AND GAPS
COMPILE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

STEP V.

Determining Community Needs

Organization is essential for this part of the process. The goal of this step is to gather information. There is not a lot of creative energy expended during this step, so you might run the risk of boring the people working on the project. For this reason the facilitative process is key. If each person who is working on the core group takes responsibility for gathering some information, the work will go quickly.

There are two parts to this section. First you will be determining what exists already. Secondly you will determine the needs of the teenage parents in your community.

What is the situation in your community?

You and the people who are working on developing a project have confronted some of the important issues and concerns which you will encounter while working with adolescent parents in Step II. of this process. You have explored your own values. You have had the opportunity to check out your own motives for working with adolescent parents.

Now think about your own community. Just as each person has his or her own set of values and cultural and familial experiences, a community has its prevailing values. While personal values may be the result of family upbringing, cultural heritage, religious beliefs, books, study, educational experiences or the example of mentors and personal heros (or combination of these,) a community norm is made up of the collection of these values for all the members of a community.

In some communities, there may be an unalarmed acceptance of young people becoming pregnant and getting married during their teen years. In other communities, very few teens get married or have children until well after high school. In some communities, if there is a pregnancy at the local high school, the community reaction results in almost total isolation of an expectant teen. Most communities in Wisconsin are somewhere in between these reactions to adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.. Within the last twenty years there has been a growing awareness of the needs and the special problems of the teenage parent. Of course most communities do not embrace the notion of adolescent pregnancy, though when one results, there is generally a more accepting climate. The past practice of "sending them away" for six months used to be common, but generally does not exist today. In the past, teens placed their babies for adoption or got married quickly. More and more adolescent parents are remaining unmarried and are not placing their children for adoption.

In some communities many mothers of teens remain in the home instead of going out to work. In other communities it is rare to find a woman without small children in the home during the work week. In some settings,

and in some cultures, it is assumed that the mother of the teen mother will be responsible for rearing her grandchild while her daughter finishes school. Increasingly this is also not the case. Changing community norms and changing women's roles combined with a growing teen parent population without traditional supports present new problems for our communities.

Before you started thinking about this project, you may already have had a sense of what your community's norm is. Perhaps your concern for this issue has stemmed from your awareness of the lack of support for teenaged parents and expectant adolescent parents.

The process below will help you assess your community's values and needs. The first thing to do is to consult with your local school district, United Way and local governments, to see if there have been any formal needs assessments made during the last five years. If there have, make sure that these are studied. If there is information that is relevant, check to make sure that it is still current information. (See the flow chart on Determining Community Needs.)

A. Define your community. Is there a certain geographical section of your community which you will focus upon? Is it a town, school district or county?

B. Determine the number of adolescent parents in your community. Check in the back of this handbook in the Appendix for the birth rate in your county. Check the statistics available through your local county Department of Social Services. Further information is available from the Resource List in the Appendix.

C. Assess what usually happens to adolescent parents in your community. County Social Services, your local high schools and statistical information may assist you in determining this information. This might be hard information to identify. You may have to settle for identifying trends, not facts. Review school attendance options for pregnant and parenting teens. What do pregnant teens usually do when they are still attending high school. Are there studies on why teens drop out? If not, pregnancy is a likely reason. Try to talk with school counselors who are willing to help you gather information.

Don't ignore males in your gathering of information. Many programs and studies assume that teenaged pregnancy is a female problem. Males' lives often are affected by a pregnancy and the birth of a child. Many teens dads go to work in order to help support a child financially, even when there is not a marriage or long term relationship with the baby's mother.

During this part of the process, you may be able to persuade other agencies, and departments of your local (county or municipal) governments to conduct studies which would reveal additional statistical data, which might help you in assessing needs in your area.

D. Determine local community leaders to identify trends. The work of this step might well be covered while doing the previous one. At any rate, there will be key people in your community who can assist you by giving you their general impressions of what the community response to adolescent pregnancy has been. Your local school district may have policies which have been set by a few people who are on the school board. You will want to acquaint yourselves with the attitudes of the people who make public policy decisions in your community. Use the group of people who are planning to help you in making up a list of people to interview.

E. Identify and interview teen parents in your community. If you have not included teen parents in your work so far, it is essential that you do it now. If you have one on your planning group, you may suggest he/she will take the responsibility of contacting others. High school counselors, and clinic personnel or social services may assist you in giving names of people to contact.

F. Prepare a concise report on the reactions of your community to adolescent pregnancy and parenting. This will contain a brief review of the information you have compiled earlier.

G. Prepare a list of available community resources and what their functions are. If there are any obstacles for teen parents in using these resources, indicate those on a parallel list. This list will be available for all of those on your planning committee. It will be useful for providing volunteers with resources in the community. Include housing, financial, vocational, educational, recreational, nutritional and social support programs on your list. Don't ignore the supportive services that deal with emotional and family issues, which adolescent parents may encounter.

H. Gather group to identify needs and gaps in services or opportunities. This may be the first time you will invite a large number of people to be part of your process. With the information that you have gathered, and with the input of a group of knowledgeable people at the end of this meeting, you will be able to specify the needs in your community. Make sure that the key people who you have identified during your process of collecting information are invited. It is also important to have teenage parents or parents of teenage parents present at this meeting.

A sample agenda is included below. Your main goal for the meeting is to brainstorm and identify as many needs as possible. Your core group will be able to identify the program goals which are possible and reasonable for you to carry out within the context of what is needed after this part of the process is completed.

I. Develop information for your community. This will be the document which gets prepared from the information which is gathered during the first six steps of this process. You may consider using an outline which contains the following categories:

- resources available
- participation level
- obstacles to participation
- what is needed
- resources/programs needed
- methods of provision possible
- obstacles to provision
- what is needed

By using a format as suggested you will be able to determine if your goals should include ways to encourage the participation level in existing programs, or whether you should concentrate on providing services directly (or a combination of both.) It is possible that you may find that someone else or another program is better suited to providing specific services. Your program might also decide to encourage the development of other programs which are more appropriate for someone else to provide. (e.g. lack of recreational programs, might be provided by the YWCA, volunteers from your project might help provide transportation and child care.)

STEP VI.

Form Study and Research Group

In order to plan your project, you will want the members of the core group or the planning groups to further acquaint themselves with the topic of adolescent pregnancy. There is no need for anyone to make this into a great academic endeavor. There is a wide variety of interesting (and sometimes entertaining) information available on adolescent parents. Reading true-life stories of adolescent parents will assist everyone involved to share in the personal lives of a variety of young parents. Some of the highly recommended books are in the annotated bibliography in this handbook. The bibliography is just an example of some of the things which are available. Check your library. There are also many films which may be found at the State Library system, the Family Resource Coalition and your local school district, or planned parenthood.

The best source for national statistics is the Alan Guttmacher Institute. Ordering information for the Institute is also in the Appendix.

While you are studying available information, have your group members form their own annotated bibliography to use for the volunteers who will be trained. Keep notes of information and resources you will want to share with your volunteers. Some books and films on adolescent pregnancy are dated or biased, watch for onesided approaches which condemn teens. It would be hard to build a useful project with this attitude.

STEP VII.

Develop Philosophy and Project Values

The CONNECT Experience chapter may assist you in developing your goals. Reread the philosophy and goals portion before moving ahead.

Exercise:

- Have each member of the group write down ten things they feel would be important to list as program beliefs or values. Use ten minutes or less. (Some of these may be included as assumptions.) Share these with group members by writing them down on big sheets of paper.

- Are there similarities? If some are very similar or the same, you may decide to put them down as one item. What values seem to be the most important to the members? (Imagine how you will want the relationships of the volunteers, and the teen parents to be framed. What understandings will be important? What will the assumptions of the program be as the actual work of your project gets done?) Spend time looking at all the beliefs. Discuss as necessary.

- Now have each person indicate the five most important items. Give the highest rated five points,the next four points and so on. Each person will get to vote for their own favorites. Add up the points. Because there is not a limit to the number of things you can list, you may choose to include more than ten things. Nothing which has even a few points needs to be eliminated unless the group decides to do so.

- Discuss the outcome. Group them into categories which deal with similar attributes. As you read and discuss them, do you see major gaps or values which conflict? If there are conflicting or antagonistic values, the group should eliminate them (or one).

- Frame values in positive statements whenever possible. For example:
  NOT - People will not be ignored, mistreated or put down because of their racial or cultural group.
  BUT - All people will be respected. Racial and cultural diversity will be accepted and valued.

- Prepare a draft philosophy and assumptions. You may need one person to write these statements into a draft philosophy. Review, discuss and change if necessary, and approve.

STEP VIII.

Develop goals and methods. Decide what you will actually do in your project.

As you have been identifying the needs of the community and then your philosophy, you will probably begin to imagine what kind of needs your project will be able to assist in filling. BE REASONABLE this is the time when all of your hard work will come to fruition or will fizzle. Choose a few things or one of the goals which will accomplish something. You will probably know what things will be possible given your current or easily attainable resources.

Now is the time to examine what volunteers can actually do. Read the chapter on Using Volunteers again. What is missing or not working in your community that if "fixed" or planned for, could make a difference? Using the brainstorming methods in the Appendix, list as many things as you can that you think volunteers could do to help teen parents. This is a list of methods.

After the brainstorming is over, discuss each one of the items. Discounting the ones which will take more financial assistance than you can afford. Also discard ideas, which will make the "volunteer take over" for the participant. Put these ideas in three categories, POSSIBLE - TOO EXPENSIVE - TOO DEPENDENT INDUCING. Make a list of the overall goals of the project. What do you hope will result from your work? Look back at your original one sentence statements. Do they fit? Agree to have no more than five goals. If you are starting with little community support even two general goals would be enough. (e.g. to provide teen parents with relief from isolation; to provide opportunities for teen parents to more fully share in the life of the community; to provide teen parents support for developing their family living skills and child management skills.) The methods will be the ways you will try to accomplish your goals. (e.g. Goal - to provide teenage parents relief from isolation. Method by - providing transportation, friendly visiting, inviting out for lunch, taking to meetings, starting a playgroup, etc.)

Is there agreement on the part of the core group that these are reasonable and possible and important goals? Start small, the process encourages re-evaluation and there will be plenty of chances to add more to do later.

Developing a Training Program

The development of your individualized training program will be important for the volunteers who will provide support to teenage parents. This training will provide opportunities for potential volunteers to:

1. obtain information
2. learn about and practice skills
3. allow a self-assessment of the ability/willingness to meet the goals

of the project.

Have a core group or designated people assess the abilities of the volunteer trainees.

You may wish to develop a separate planning group to develop your training. There should be at least two people doing this. Consider having the two people who will have the prime responsibility for facilitating the training plan it. The core group will be able to review it and make suggestions.

1. Look at goals for the project.
2. Make a list of what needs to be done in order to help meet those goals.
3. List the methods which will be used to do those things that need to be done. (How to do it.)
4. Identify knowledge and skills which will be necessary in order to do the things that need to be done.

STEP IX.

Develop and Conduct Training

In general the knowledge and skills which will be necessary for volunteers to obtain will be similar for most goals unless they are very specific. (e.g. child birth coaching, teaching a skill)

For instance:

.. knowledge of general issues of adolescent pregnancy and parenting
. situation/attitudes in their community
. ability to listen/communicate with adolescent parent
. knowledge of other resources

You will be able to think of others. These will be the components you will choose to put into your training.

It is recommended that the initial portion of the training will include sharing of information which has been gathered during the first parts of your process. Include others who helped to present this information. You will find it helpful to include a few teen parents to be resource people for your volunteers. Their presence will provide volunteers with the opportunity to learn of first-person experiences. Use the Why Do You Want to be Involved chapter in your first training session. An outline of the CONNECT training is included here. It may be useful in planning for your own training.

Conduct Training

A. Recruit volunteers - It may be that you have already generated enough interest during the planning so that you won't have to work very hard to get potential volunteers. Be sure to give potential volunteers a good idea of what will be expected of them. Use the

self-screening tool prior to the beginning of the training. This will enable volunteers to examine their own values before you begin. Limit the number of trainees to a manageable size. More than six and less than twenty is generally a good size group to train.

Press releases sent to newspapers, organizations and churches should get several inquiries.

B. Screen volunteers - If volunteers are unknown to you - CHECK REFERENCES. You will be able to screen volunteers after the training as well. If the trainers feel uneasy about a person after conferences, match two volunteers together for the first couple of matches. Generally if someone is lacking in skills they will be able to identify this for themselves. You may require additional experience (going to parents meetings, helping organizationally) before they are ready. Do not place or match volunteers if there are reservations about them.

CONNECT uses volunteer information forms which encourage self disclosure of personal information. Life experiences, problems encountered or crises confronted are considered attributes and not detrimental to one's ability to be helpful volunteers. Usually if a person has confronted difficult issues in their own lives - considerable growth and change results. This growth can be important in modeling capable and mature responses to daily situations for teen parents.

The trainers should be people who have facilitation skills. It is important that potential volunteers not only "learn" but "teach" as well, sharing their own experiences and expertise with others. Optimally the volunteers can become support people as well as consultants to each other. One of the benefits for many volunteers is the building of friendships which often result from a training program.

Trainers should be willing to deviate from their plans to accomodate group needs. Especially in the first few training sessions the willingness to change a plan may make the difference in a hit or a flop. When potential volunteers are given the opportunity to indicate what they need to know more about, they will be getting more out of the training than they would if it were inflexible and rigid. Be cautious though, don't let one or two people entirely change your plans. Be responsive to the needs of the group. Stick to your plans enough to insure that the goals of the training do not change. If someone has serious concerns or specific requests that no one else seems to have, suggest a private conference, a reading or other resource that might be helpful.

Use an agenda to make sure that the essentials are covered, and use a facilitative technique which encourages full participation; your training will be a key component to the success of your project.

If there are gaps in the training, you will be able to fill those by using in-services. In-service training opportunities will keep your volunteer corps involved and interested. One-half of the allotted time might be spent discussing current matches' problems and ideas. The rest

of the time might be a program; a film, a community resource presentation or practice with a skill which the coordinators or volunteers feel is generally lacking. Your inservice training will enable you also to get feed-back, to problem solve and to develop new plans for your project.

Ideas for utilizing the volunteer skills in your community are included in the chapter on Using Volunteers.

Your training completed, you are ready to get on to the real reason for all of your endeavors so far, working with adolescent parents.

STEP X.

Recruiting Participants and Providing Community Education

Recruiting teen parents may be the most difficult task of your work so far. Keep in mind the nature of the adolescent. Imagine needing to "prove" yourself to people over and over again. Remember that teen parents are often unwilling to accept help because they can't afford to appear "weak" or helpless.

The chapters describing real life situations and the recommended readings may give you a sample of what a teen parent's life is like.

Designing a Brochure

You may find that a simple brochure or poster will assist you in recruiting teen parents. A piece of paper explaining yourselves will enable you to hand over something even if assistance is not accepted at the first contact. Some people respond well to the written word. After a phone conversation, it might help to keep in touch by sending a brochure and a note in the mail. Here are some hints for designing a brochure:

- Provide answers to who, what, where, when, why and how.
- Give only the key points of your project, don't include too much information.
- Keep it simple, not too "slick" - you don't want to give the impression that your project is programmed assistance, or that anyone will take over for them.
- Keep it cheap. Lots of money can go into a brochure that may not work well.
- Don't pity them, or make them feel needy - use the brochure to encourage their participation by expressing some general concerns, e.g., all parents have a tough job, or "parenting is the hardest job in the world."
- Test it out before making final copies. Photocopy your "draft" and share it with others (especially teen parents) to get their opinion.
- Make your project sound positive and enjoyable.

You may ask someone with artistic abilities to assist. Bright colors are good to use, but more expensive. The words, format, and colors used will be parts of conveying your message.

Letters to Community Groups - Agencies

You will find it necessary to send out information to possible referral sources. Use your planning lists to determine where to send them. Your letter should include who, what, where, when, why and how in slightly more detail than the brochure. "How to refer" is an important part of this letter. Encourage people to call to find out more about your program. Make sure you indicate your desire and willingness to cooperate with other groups or agencies. In the days of limited financial resources, other programs might see you as a possible threat to their survival, or growth. In most communities there is only a certain amount of money available for funding any program. If you are funded, mention the source. If not, and you expect to use very little financial assistance, explain that. Working relationships which are positive among groups/agencies can strengthen the whole community. You have the opportunity to be a leader in this cause.

Other Contacts With Community Groups/Agencies

Often a letter will not be enough for someone to refer young parents to you. People need to recognize the name of your project and know someone involved. Call agencies, hospital social workers, schools, social services workers. Ask them specifically if they have teens to suggest for your program, chat a little while about your project if they seem to have time or interest, offer your time to make presentations to staffs of larger agencies. Make yourself available to parent organizations in schools or churches.

Approaches to Teen Parents

Your initial approaches to teen parents can be sensitive. Sometimes this is the hardest part of the program. Some of the following strategies may assist you in contacting and engaging young parents:

- Use volunteers or other young parents to make first contacts if possible. First contacts will work best if other teens can endorse your project.

- Make your first contact personal. Share information about yourself. (e.g., "Hi Mary, my name is Sal. Your teacher Ms. Smith said she had talked to you about the _____ project. I was a teen parent and I remember how I felt during the 7th month of pregnancy and thought I'd give you a call. I remember I was real excited and also pretty scared."

- Make statements and ask questions which encourage conversation (not one word responses.)

- Explain why there is a project. Use a fairly common example. (e.g., "I thought you might like to know why we started a project. Pretty often teens who are pregnant get stuck at home with nothing to do..."

- Be honest about your experiences.

- Don't assume she has all the same feelings as you have had.

- Ask for her assistance if you have a need for it. (e.g., "We are just starting and need some people who are going to be teen parents to help us out - would you consider having some soda at the drug store and telling me what you think of the brochure we just made up?"

- Be careful not to interfere with her family. Find out if her parents are OK with your involvement.

- Mention specifics of a reason for a referral if it seems appropriate. (e.g., "Cathy? Hi, this is Susan from _____ project. Your doctor called and said that you needed a childbirth coach. I have coached three women before and I'd really love to help you have your baby. Maybe we could get together and I'll show you some pictures of my two year old being born."

  Or:

  "Mindy, hi, this is Pat from _____. My friend Cindy said she knows you from church and that you're looking for an apartment. I thought I could help you, I just went through looking for one myself. Have you thought about what kind of apartment you would like? I have a car and I'd be glad to help you look for one. Would you like that?"

- Find a "safe" place to meet for the first time. If you aren't part of a project that has official space - in some cases you may want to choose 'neutral' territory to meet. A school, church or community setting where someone will let you use a room for meetings. If a teen parent seems reluctant to meet you at your home or hers, or reluctant to go in a car with you, find some safe place to meet. Self protective behavior programs or practices would have taught young people not to be immediately trusting. You want to encourage that kind of response, so provide some safe alternatives. After meeting you in person you will not usually have this problem.

- Include children in a first meeting. This may include yours, hers or both. Kids can help introductions along. They can give you both something to talk about.

Media

Talk with your local papers about running a story about the start of your project. The Appendix contains a feature story run by the Capital Times about CONNECT volunteers. This was a useful piece because it made the volunteers seem like "real" people. You can also issue press releases. A suggested press release format is also in the Appendix.

Don't forget to get the radio station that most teens listen to in your area involved. Go into the station with your brochure and some facts handy. Reaching teens this way is usually successful.

Keep in mind that media is competitive. Press releases can be sent to all the papers, and radio and TV, but features or special stories should be offered only to one at a time.

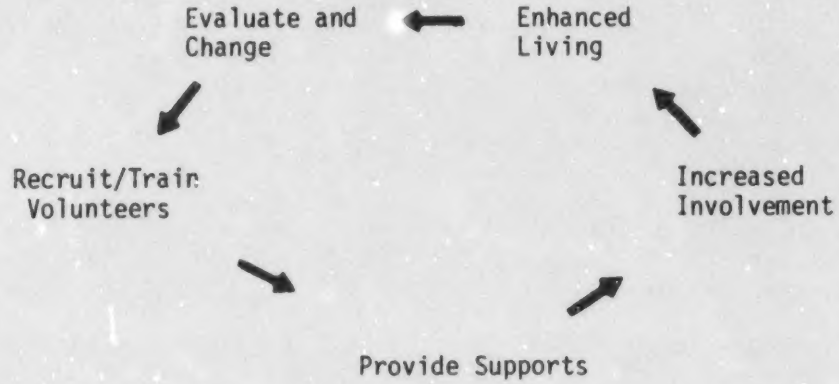
Other Recruitment Strategies

Don't ignore the obvious in your community! Recruitment may also take place in person at WIC appointments, public health clinics, or at community centers or GED class sites. Find out where teen parents are likely to be.

Bus posters, signs or notes in stores or laundromats are other possibilities.

Doing It! Making Your Project Work

As you can see on the flow chart, at this point you go into a never ending circle. (Sometimes though, you will need to go back to stages in your process to reassess or replan.) The circle idea is intentional. These parts of the process will happen over and over again in a healthy project. Someday those who have been helped, may be your volunteers. As teen parents grow and develop, they will become more instrumental in your program. Adolescent parents will make your project complete. Find creative ways to use them whenever possible. Let them have the opportunity to pass on the helping to someone else.



Don't Be Discouraged - Some Other Ideas

At first, recruitment of adolescent parents might be difficult. Don't give up! Most programs start slowly. Though your program is to match volunteers with teens, you may want to have occasional meetings with teen parents. Ask your planner teens to help. Show a movie, provide child care and food or plan a meeting which will directly benefit the babies. A two session toy making class is another idea. Perhaps a discussion using a film first would work.

Classes and learning based programs for teenaged parents offer some interesting problems. It is not unusual that the teenage parent has had a negative experience in their school environment. It is also likely that many of the teenaged parents you will work with will be in school and not anxious to be part of another class.

It would be fruitless for a volunteer or a staff person to assume that any parent is anxious to learn how to parent the "right" way. It is unlikely that any adolescent will want to learn by lecture, or by being instructed by an expert. There is a lot for a teenaged parent to lose by indicating that they don't already know how to parent. Society usually reinforces the notion that mothers are a special breed, and that pregnancy and giving birth gives them all they need to be a good parent. All kinds of stereotypes and notions may be brought to a group for young parents.

If you are going to provide meetings, be careful about your approach. Let the young parents help plan gatherings as much as possible. At meetings you might find some "natural" matches occurring. Volunteers should be on hand so the parents can meet them. Some smaller communities might have only a few adolescent parents. You might plan for them to visit someone's home for pizza. If at all possible, provide transportation - if the meeting is at night, don't have it last too long. Make sure everyone gets home early.

Keeping In Touch

One of the biggest problems in working with adolescent parents is their mobility. It is not unusual for a pregnant or parenting teen to move several times in a year. A disagreement with a roommate or parent might initiate a rapid move. Ask your participants to let you know when they move. Rarely does a young person remember to notify the post office of a change of address.

It is also not unusual for a teen parent not to have a telephone. This makes arrangements difficult for a volunteer who wants to contact a match. When someone is referred to you, try and get a friend or parent's phone number. The volunteer may leave notes on a door or depending on their relationship, stop by. The participant should be asked how he/she would like your project to maintain contact. (If a teen doesn't have a phone, the volunteer might offer the occasional

use of their phone for taking care of making appointments and doing other business.) Find out if your participant can be called at school or at a neighbor's.

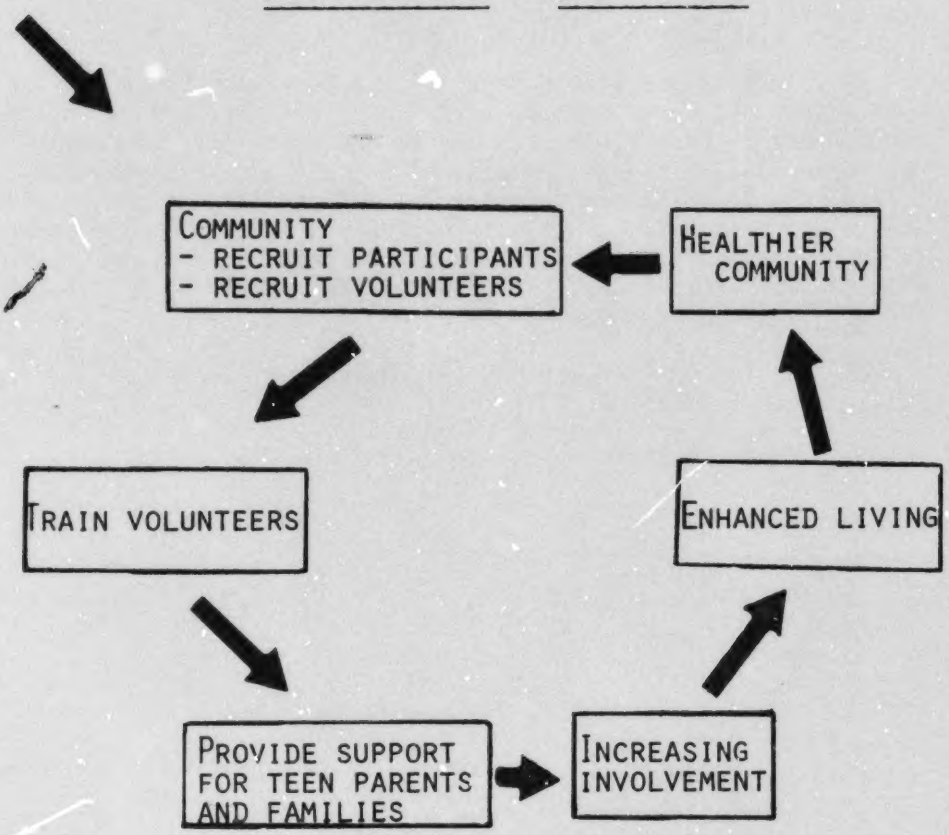
Teen parents usually like to get mail. A friendly note or card from a volunteer might help to establish a relationship.

Doing It! What Is Success?

By this time you should have all the necessary ingredients to make a good program. Look back over your notes from time to time. Are you doing things which respond to the needs in your community? Are there ways to change the program to meet individual needs? How can you keep your program going? Are you providing opportunities for participants and volunteers to give you suggestions or comments? Is there a growing acceptance of your project in the community? Even when you are established, you will want to provide ways to keep your project fluid and dynamic.

The chapter on Evaluation will provide more information on measuring your success.

PROGRAM CIRCLE



CHAPTER 8

ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE

Staffing and Funding Your Project

ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE

Staffing and Funding Your Project

Most projects which have active participation of volunteers who are carefully screened, trained and have a mechanism for communication with others in the project, will not need staffing. Generally a volunteer or a group of volunteers will be able to maintain the administrative and maintenance functions of a well organized project unless it is large. If there are many participants or many referrals (several a week),a part-time facilitator position may be necessary. In small projects the responsibilities may be shared or may be a specific volunteer role.

The administrative and maintenance tasks which will need to be taken care of by a facilitator(s) (paid or unpaid) are:

- To provide information to inquiries, be a contact person;
- To take referrals;
- To maintain linkages with other programs - agencies;
- To recruit, train, screen and support volunteers;
- To facilitate matches between teen parents, families and volunteers;
- To maintain paperwork, records, forms.

Volunteer groups which take on these roles must make sure that no one gets overwhelmed by them. Once your program is functioning, the planning committee can begin to assume a board of directors or an advisory committee role. This board or committee will oversee the project whether it is facilitated by a group or by one paid person. Make sure that people who became part of the project in order to work one to one with teen parents don't get "stuck" with the maintenance work. You may start your project by having an all volunteer staff, and later grow to the point where you need a paid person. If that is the case, it will be helpful to the staff if you provide as much information about your development process as possible. It is important that all people who work on the project know and understand the philosophy and assumptions which have been developed to guide the program. The people who have worked hard planning, will need to know that those goals and philosophies will be respected.

This project will be different from most other projects because of the process which was used during its development. If a facilitator is appointed by an agency - or hired by a group of people, the integrity of the project will be maintained if the staff does not take on a directive role.

It is unlikely that more than a half-time position will be

necessary to facilitate your project. In fact, there is some danger that the community responsibility and ownership of the project will be lost if there is over-staffing.

It may be that an agency or well-established group was instrumental in starting the project. In that case, the hired staff may in part "belong" to someone else other than the group (advisory or board) which shares responsibility for the project. The staff person may even be appointed. It is usually preferable that a hiring group be formed from the planners, volunteers and participants if someone new will be hired as the project coordinator or facilitator.

If the facilitator's position does not detract from the ownership of others, then it can be very useful to have a paid person who can provide on-going maintenance of the project. The decision to hire staff and the clarification of the facilitator's role should be well thought out, just as the rest of your project has been. Continuing ownership by a group of dedicated people whether there is paid staff or not, will be instrumental to the long range effectiveness of your project.

Funding

Sometimes funding is the downfall of an otherwise successful project. Fundraising can take enormous amounts of energy and time. Extensive money searching or moneymaking may not be necessary at all if you are small or creative in other efforts to secure support.

In some communities, you may get the required assistance from the business community. A printer may donate copying or brochure preparation. A store may supply paper and other office supplies. A simple explanation of your project may be all that is necessary to get substantial help.

Other community organizations may also assist. Churches, banks, schools are good places to seek meeting space. A scout troop may help to provide child care.

An organized agency may agree to take phone calls for you or provide some office support. Perhaps an agency might loan you a small amount of a staff person's time who will serve as a "communicator."

Involve the community or the teen parents and volunteers in grass roots fundraising. A garage sale, bake sale or raffle may provide you with more than enough money to pay for paper, stamps, and other essentials. There are many good books and phamplets that can be helpful in planning your fundraising events. Service clubs, churches or schools may take the leadership or provide help in fundraising. This, will also help in developing community support for your work.

If more substantial funding is necessary, contact local public funding bodies. City, county or state sources are a possibility. Ask those who are on your committees for suggestions. Foundations and local service clubs may be of great assistance. A high school student council may be willing to help raise funds. Most libraries have Foundation Directories which may provide potential sources.

Generally it is better to start small and grow slowly as your capabilities and resources increase. Programs who become dependent on large amounts of money for survival run the risk of failure. If you have only a few committed volunteers who are involved in meaningful matches with the teens they work with, then you will be providing a great service to the community, without looking for funding. As in the rest of your work, the process which you use for making decisions and planning strategies will be all important.

CHAPTER 9

EVALUATION CHAPTER

EVALUATION: YOUR MEASURE OF SUCCESS

If you are going to spend the time and energy necessary to start a project for teen parents, then you will want to spend time and energy to evaluate it. The form of evaluation and the measures of success which you choose to use while considering project value, will be dependent upon a variety of factors.

From a programatic point of view, it is essential to evaluate your project in some on-going way. A prevention project should be fluid and always responding to the needs of those which the project is set up to assist. If the people who are served by a project have responsibilities for the maintenance of it, then they become transformed from clients (people who get domething done to them) to participants (people who take part in a process of change.) These participants may have the power to change the program in order to constantly meet their own needs and the needs of others.

The process of evaluation can be very simple. If people who are participants are taking responsibility for planning, then evaluation is taking place. If there is a process for making plans and changing a project, then evaluation is taking place. In these situations, a discussion of "what is working well, and what doesn't seem to be working," which would be part of planning, is an evaluation.

One of the most important parts of a prevention program evaluation (especially in a project for teen parents) is the need to make sure that the evaluation does not interfere with the process of the project. It should embellish it, not detract from it.

For instance: Jenny is just building trust with her match volunteer. It has taken four months for Jenny to share some of her fears and problems with her volunteer, Kate. Kate is relieved that Jenny finally trusts her. Part of the problem for Jenny was,that since Kate was part of a program, Jenny didn't believe that what went on between them would remain confidential.

Just when their relationship was beginning to have some depth, the program evaluation was starting. Sue called Jenny and started asking her to fill out forms; to give answers to questions about how Kate helps her. Jenny is destroyed. One of the things that she liked about Kate was that she didn't push too hard for information "and now this Sue woman!" "She wants to know everything about me." Sue is just filling her volunteer role, that is, to get information about how teen parents are doing with their volunteer matches. But this evaluation has dampened Jenny's trust in Kate.

In this situation, Kate should have been consulted before Sue

called Jenny about the match. Some people will be unable or not ready to participate in an evaluation. It doesn't make sense to put the program on the line and risk losing participants in order to get information. Perhaps Jenny could have responded anonymously to a questionaire. At any rate, the evaluation described above was intrusive, and negatively changed the program and the relationship between Jenny and Kate.

Evaluations which can assist in changing the program to benefit the participants are credible. You might ask some of the participants to take the lead and do the direct contact for your evaluation.

Qualitative Data Gathering

When you ask for people's opinions and impressions by using open ended questions, you are gathering qualitative information. Evaluations which are too specific and ask for programmed responses are often frustrating for the person who is filling them out. (Especially if they have comments.) If your goal is to get impressions on the quality or the success of a project, then a qualitative questionnaire using open ended questions will be the most effective and least intrusive.

Project planners will need to make decisions on what kind of information is necessary to collect in order to help the program grow and change. The Board of Directors, Planning Committee and volunteers may indicate what information seems necessary in order to continue to make plans, which respond to changing needs. Questions like: Would you participate more if there were some changes? If so what do you suggest? What do you like most? What do you like least?

The Simple Plan

A simple way to plan an evaluation is to look at your goals. What can you do to find out if these goals are being met? This handbook assumes that a fairly simple grass roots program is under operation. If that is so, then reporting and evaluation should be simple too. For example - one of your main goals is to provide teen parents with opportunities to learn about parenting skills. If you managed to get a class going, and there was participation, or if you had your volunteers modeling positive parenting and the teens were asking to learn more about child management, then you obviously were meeting your goal.

This sort of evaluation will involve the feedback by staff, volunteers or a group of people who will monitor goals and activities.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data will be fairly easy to gather. Perhaps you want to count the number of volunteers, and the number of participants. Perhaps you want to count the number of volunteer hours spent on the

project. This kind of information is quantitative data. It is especially useful when you include it with qualitative data to explain the value of your project. Comparisons of quantitative data can be useful too. Quantitative data indicates that there is (or is not) participation. The level of participation is easily assessed using this information.

If you have complete control over the kind of evaluation tool which is used, you can choose to gather the information which will obtain the most useful information possible for your purposes.

Many program oriented people have trouble doing evaluations, just because they take time away from other things. Often though, upon doing them, many benefits come from the obtained information. Plans are often made more easily after a good evaluation.

There are many more sophisticated ways to develop useful evaluation tools. Remember though, the people involved in prevention projects are not clients. You will not be responsible for measuring the changes that they experience. If that should happen, then the program loses much of its purpose and credibility. The participants should have the opportunity to judge their changes and growth for themselves.

When Your Funder Requires Something Different

Sometimes programs are encumbered in their evaluation process by a funding body or someone who expects that you show results from the money which you receive. Usually if this is the case, you have already needed to rewrite your goals and participant descriptions into more traditional social service language before you started. Generally the projects which are funded by public or private sources are programs for whom the evaluation is not a problem. Traditional evaluations are not unreasonable for most kinds of programs.

If you are really concerned about the effect a required evaluation will have on your program, make an appointment with the appropriate people. Explain why this sort of evaluation might be intrusive or affect your work in a negative way. Negotiate a different kind of evaluation. It would be to your advantage to have some alternate plans available for consideration.

Sometimes you will just have to do the best you can by remaining flexible in your approach to your participants. Explaining why you need the information from them and what good it might do. ("Our funders need this information in order for them to consider our request for next year.")

Evaluation Positives for Your Program

The evaluation process might enable you to do some positive

programmatic things. For instance, you may include participants in the gathering of information. They will know how valuable their assistance is and will feel useful. Evaluation may be a good excuse for getting in touch with participants who have dropped away from the program. Often a call asking for their assistance is just the thing that they need to get reinvolved. Use the evaluation as an opportunity to do outreach at the same time.

Positive comments made will uplift the people who are working on a project. Share the information; compile the comments on a page or two and let others see the responses of the participants and the volunteers. This will be a useful form of communication.

If there is some general concern about the program and it can be changed fairly easily, then do it rapidly. It will help the teen parents to know that their concerns are taken seriously and that people really do want the project to be theirs.

The constant reassessment will make the difference between the ho-hum project and the really great project. You will be enabled to change little things while keeping the goals of your project intact if you are constantly getting feedback and reaction.

Note: A sample evaluation is included in the Appendix. An actual page of evaluation responses is included in the Appendix.

CONCLUSION

YOU CAN HELP THEM "BEAT THE ODDS"

CONCLUSION

Most of this handbook addresses the process by which individuals, a group of people or a community can build a program to support teen parents. There is not enough information in this handbook to adequately describe what it is really like to be a teen parent. Some of the sources in the Bibliography will be helpful in getting more of an insight on some of the individual and collective concerns that teen parents have.

The best help in finding out more will come from your own exposure to teen parents when they share their lives with you. Using teen parents to help in your program planning will be invaluable.

Sometimes it is very difficult to work with teenage parents. Often they are reluctant to do anything that might indicate problems. They often shy away from expressing their needs. Everyone does pay close attention to the adolescent parent. People watch and make judgments about their parenting all of the time. Adolescent parents are often worried about criticism from others. Some teen parents live in constant fear of having their children taken away from them. When they don't know how to handle a situation, it is hard to ask for help. They fear that their questions might be viewed as weaknesses in their abilities as parents. Many adolescents are resistant to having anyone intrude in their lives.

It is essential that you build a climate where teen parents can feel safe enough to get the help that they need. Good models which provide a chance to see that all parents need support to do a good job will greatly increase your ability to help meet the needs of teenage parents. As your program grows, teen parents will help to provide this climate too. When adolescent parents begin to help others - then the project is well on its way to helping the participants form their own supportive networks and support systems.

Sometimes, no matter how much support and caring a teen parent gets, things will not work out too well. For instance, your participants might need to place their children in foster care or a teen parent might lose their parental rights. If this or another consequence which seems negative results, you should not blame yourself or the program. Ultimately your project exists to assist young parents to care for their children in positive ways. Ultimately the final goal is healthy adults and healthy children. Sometimes it is best for teens to have their children removed from their custody. It is important to know that some adolescents and even some adults cannot make it as parents.

While you go about your work of providing support for young parents, there are some things which are essential to keep in mind. Teen parents often encounter crisis after crisis. Some of their crises result from events over which neither you nor they have any control. Some crisis situations may disappear after a time, others after coping skills are learned. Other crisis situations are eliminated as the teen parent moves from the typically stormy adolescent period into adulthood.

Programs need to face the fact that they will be supporting young parents in crisis situations. Most of these situations will be transitional. While teen parents will have special needs, they will also have regular needs: those of typical adolescents. Some of their needs will not even involve their children.

All of this may make you want to say "forget it." Your job will not be simple. Working with other human beings is always complex. There are not "right" ways or prescriptions for working with and supporting other people. Before you close this handbook and dismiss the idea of working with adolescent parents, remember that crisis can promote and bring about the opportunity for change.

Adolescence is a time of remarkable growth and change. Many adolescent parents are eager for support, and soak up all the resources and information made available to them. There is so much potential for growth in teen parents. It is exciting to be involved with young people who are in this developmental process.

You will be involved in many fulfilling situations when you work with adolescent parents. When an atmosphere of sharing is developed it will not only be the young parent who will benefit. Being "let in" on someone else's life is a wonderful privilege.

There is joy in new life - in a new baby and in the chance for an adolescent to start something new. Being with a new dad when he sees his child for the first time, sharing in his marveling at new life. Being there at the birth of a child. Supporting someone who needs assistance. Sharing in the challenge of working out a problem. Being part of changing a crisis into a new opportunity. Knowing that your assistance has made someone's life better is a wonderful reward.

The process of building a program is a challenge. Being realistic about your personal abilities and the program's ability to provide support for adolescent parents is important. Move slowly and purposefully. Listen and respond to your participant's feed-back. Involve your community. An energetic and productive program will result.

You can help teen parents "beat the odds!"

- Peg Scholtes

APPENDIX I

- CONNECT Brochure
- Screening Exercises for CONNECT Project
- CONNECT Volunteer Training Outline
- CONNECT Volunteer Survey
- CONNECT Volunteer Reporting Form
- CONNECT Participant-Contact Volunteer Reporting Form
- CONNECT Referral
- CONNECT Contact
- CONNECT Guidelines for Childbirth Coaches
- Evaluation - Cumulative
- Sample Letters

BEING A PARENT CAN BE VERY HARD . . . HARD FOR ANYONE.

Young parents, especially parents under 21, may need special support: from family, friends, and the community.

CONNECT is a program especially for these young parents. It is also a program for their families.

"My baby and I are doing okay–I just want to get a chance to meet some other moms. I want to hear about how other people raise their children."

You don't need to have big problems to be involved in **CONNECT**. All parents can make things better for themselves and their children. **CONNECT** is a project planned by young parents. You may participate in any of these ways:

- Come to Parents Place South, an informal friendly place where parents of all ages meet to share information about children and family living.
- Participate by helping others, while helping yourself. We count on parents to support each other.
- Enjoy the company of other young parents during special workshops and recreational events that you help plan.
- Receive **Parent Center News**. It lets you know about resources in Dane County. Parents write articles sharing their own experiences.

"I have so much to think about, to take care of . . . the baby, food, clothing, bills, appointments, going to school. None of my friends have kids. Sometimes I feel so alone."

If you do have a problem, we can help. **CONNECT** is a program of volunteers. Many of our volunteers are parents, some of them were teenaged parents themselves. They can help in a variety of ways:

- Transportation for programs and appointments.
- Helping you to find resources for you and your child.
- Phone calls and visits.
- Help with home management skills.
- Help with financial planning.
- Someone to talk with about your child.
- Assisting with medical, legal, or human services problems.
- Helping you to make childcare arrangements.
- Helping you to find ways to continue your education.
- Translation assistance.
- Childbirth coaching.

"I'm not married to my baby's mom, but I still care about him. I want to be involved, but I'm not sure how to do it."

CONNECT is also for fathers, whether you're married or not. Other dads will share ideas with you. They can help you explore your role as a father.

"Suddenly our daughter has a baby. . . . It's hard for us to know how to treat her, as a child or as an adult. We want to be supportive, but we also want her to become independent."

CONNECT provides support to the parents of young parents. Other people who have gone through similar transitions are there to listen and share their experiences. A support group for parents of teenaged parents is available.

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
605 Spruce Street • Madison WI 53715
(608) 256 3890

SCREENING EXERCISES FOR THE CONNECT PROJECT

Volunteering for CONNECT is an unpredictable experience. During the CONNECT training and with the back-up support for volunteers, we attempt to assist you in your important volunteer role. Preparation will help, and so will some self-appraisal. The following may be useful in helping you to sort out what skills you do have, what skills you want to work on, and whether you feel ready to be a CONNECT volunteer.

Please jot down your thoughts on the following questions: (use the back of this page)

Please list common stereotypes of an adolescent who is pregnant.

Can you think of anything "good" that might come from an adolescent pregnant?

What do you think of when you imagine a teenaged dad?

What do you think your reaction would be if you found out that your daughter was 4½ months pregnant?

What were you doing when you were 18 years old? IF you had had a baby then could you have been doing the same thing?

What do you think teenaged parents need?

How do you feel about "welfare mothers?"

Self Appraisal Exercise

This activity is aimed at giving you a chance to look at the ways you relate to others. Underline the number that best illustrates your place on the scale. Draw a circle around the number that best illustrates where you would like to be.

1. Ability to listen to others in an understanding way:

   Not at all able 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Completely able

2. Willingness to discuss feelings with others:

   Completely unwilling 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Completely willing

(Please go on to the next page)

3. Awareness of the feelings of others:

   Completely unaware 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Completely aware

4. Understanding why I do what I do:

   No understanding 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Complete understanding

5. Tolerance of conflict and antagonism:

   No tolerance 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Tolerant

6. Acceptance of expressions of affection and warmth among others:

   Uncomfortably 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Readily

7. Willingness to trust others:

   Completely suspicious 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Completely trusting

8. Relationships with peers:

   Wholly competitive 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9 Wholly cooperative

(This form adopted from form by Edgar Schein, Bernard Bass, James Vaughan)

Volunteers may be faced with a variety of issues that may touch on or confront a variety of your own values.

Please think about the following:

Pregnancy under the age of 16.

Fathers who are unwilling to get married.

Abortion for teenagers.

Birth control

Alcohol and drug use.

Parents who do want their children to get married if there is a pregnancy.

Out of wedlock births.

Dropping out of school.

When people should have children. (If they should.)

What do you do/think about people whose value systems differ from yours?

What do you do when you need (have needed) support? What kinds of support have been most valuable to you?

Please fill these out and spend some time thinking about some of these issues. You will be asked to bring these sheets to the CONNECT training. These forms will be used as tools for your own purposes during the training. You will not be asked to "turn them in." They must be completed before you start the first session.

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CONNECT VOLUNTEER TRAINING OUTLINE

Training for volunteers of the CONNECT project will be conconducted by the staff of CONNECT and by volunteers who have been volunteers matched with teenaged parents. Also part of the training will include teenaged parents and the parents of teenaged parents .

The training is 12 hours long. It is planned so that there are 9 hours of training, and at least two hours before a volunteer match is made spent at Parents Place. At that time, you will have another interview with the staff and together you will decide how it is best to start off. Many people find that being matched with another volunteer at first is a good idea. You may prefer only working with the parents of teenaged parents. You may also decide to be a volunteer on Thursday nights when most of the teenaged parents come to Parents Place South.

Inservices are offered bi-monthly, and there are often other opportunities for more education on specific topics in the community. We will keep you informed about these.

TRAINING OUTLINE

- An introduction to Teenage Pregnancy and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention. (Two films, Teenaged Father and Teenaged Mother or another) Teen parents there to facilitate the discussion and answer questions.
- Normal Adolescence... what happens to it with pregnancy? What happens for the family?... What happens to hopes and dreams What about the father? What about paternal grandparents?
- Helping others... listening, planning activities, phone calls, how to make the initial approach.
- Helping others to set goals, and solve problems.

 Training

- Communication Building, Establishing Trust
- Avoiding dependancy and being "friends"
- Modeling of child management skills. Modeling of "adult" behavior. Learning home management skills.
- Community resources for teenaged parents and for their families.
- Learning through problems and crisis... Helping in a crisis. What should you do in an emergency. How much can you do, how much should you do?
- Facilitating Independence... Support without taking over.
- How can you share <u>your</u> special skills and talents?

*** *** ***

Often we will share in-service training with other groups and agencies.

CONNECT VOLUNTEER SURVEY

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

PHONE_____ AGE_____

We are trying to compile data on who our volunteers are, and why they may be interested in CONNECT. Plese be assured that your sheets will not be shared with anyone, and the information used will be in the form of total numbers, without names. If we share information with other volunteers, we will notify you first.

Are you a parent?_____ Have you (or a mate) been pregnant?_____ Have you had an abortion?_____ How old were you the first time you got pregnant?_____ How old were you the first time you became a biological parent?_____ Have you placed a child for adoption?_____ How many children do you have now?_____ What are their ages?_____ Are you employed outside the home? (where?)_____ Are you in school? (where?)_____ Are you a volunteer for FEP or other organizations? What are they?_____ Have you had family members who were teenaged parents?_____ What is their relation to you?_____ Have you had life experiences which may be helpful for a teenaged parent to know about, or have you experienced some things which may be valuable in your understanding of a teenaged parent and adolescent or children's problems?

(Possibilities include: <u>your own adolescent or childhood problems</u>, i.e. running away, drop out, school problems, pregnancy, abortion, disability, drug use or abuse, alcohol use or abuse, alcohol or drug rehabilitation, suicide attempts or depression, early marriage, shoplifting, foster home placement, severe family stress, incest, child abuse, step-family issues, living as a child in a single parent household, other juvenile delinquent behaviors; or <u>family problems</u>, i.e. divorce [your own or your parents], alcholic parents or alcoholism of children or other adults in the family, drug use of family members, living with parents after adulthood, caring for aging parents, child with disability, or any other difficult family or personal situations.)

Please use the back of this sheet to elaborate if you think that any of this information could be helpful to the program. If you wish to do this part on a separate piece of paper without your name, this would also be useful. If you prefer, you may fill out two sheets of paper, one with your name, for information you feel comfortable sharing, and one without it, for information you would rather keep confidential.

CONNECT VOLUNTEER REPORTING FORM

This form is to be used by staff and volunteers for recording "Connections" between volunteers and teenage parents or their family members.

Usually this form will be filled out when on site staff or volunteers call the direct contact volunteers on the phone.

Name_____

Name of Volunteer_____

Phone of Volunteer_____

Name of Teen Parent or Family Member_____

What kind of contact did you have? (phone, childbirth classes, advocacy, court hearings, friendly visits, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

How many times have you had contact since the last reporting period?

_____

How many volunteer hours have you spent this reporting period?

_____

Other questions (as appropriate):

How is the participant doing?

What was going on with the child?

How did the event go? What response did you get?

What does this person need? Did she/he indicate any specific needs?

Did you suggest other resources? Do you need ideas for other resources?

What can we do to support you in your connection?

Do you have any other concerns?

Do you have suggestions for topics which would be useful for you or others for inservice trainings?

Other Comments:

CONNECT

PARTICIPANT RE CONTACT VOLUNTEER REPORTING FORM
To be used by staff and volunteers for recording "connections."
Usually done over the phone by staff and volunteers at FEP.

Name of Volunteer_____

Address_____Phone_____

Name of Teenaged Parent, Name of Parent of TAP, or other.

_____

What kind of contact did you have? (phone, activity, visit, transportation, advocacy)_____

_____

_____

How long did this activity take? Count time as total time spent, including volunteer transportation time._____

_____

Other questions (as appropriate)

How is the participant doing?
What was going on with the child?
How did the event go?
What does this person need?
Did you suggest any community resources?
How is this person doing in meeting their goals?
What can CONNECT do to assist you in your helping?
What kind of contact will you have next time?
How did you feel about the connection?
Do you have any concerns about your interactions?
Do you have suggestions for topics that should be covered in in-service?

Other Comments...

NAME_____

CONNECT REFERRAL

DATE_____ PERSON MAKING REFERRAL_____

NAME_____ _____

ADDRESS_____ PHONE_____

_____

_____ IF YOUNG PARENT:

PHONE_____ LIVING WITH: SELF_____

OTHER PLACE TO CONTACT?_____ PARENTS_____ FOSTER HOME_____

_____ RELATIVES_____ OTHER (explain)

AGE_____ _____

_____

MOM_____ DAD_____ PREGNANT_____EXPECTANT DAD_____

PARENT OF TEENAGED PARENT_____ OTHER (explain)_____

IS HE/SHE IN SCHOOL (where) _____

WORKING_____

NAME(S) OF CHILD(REN)_____ AGES_____

IF REFERRED BY SOCIAL SERVICES, COURT, IS THERE ANY REASON TO KEEP RECORDS ON THIS PERSON (Explain that all young parents have control over the records that are kept.)

_____

_____

WHAT ARE CONCERNS OF PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL? _____

_____

_____

_____

Isolation _____ Skills: parenting _____ Social_____

Household _____ Educational _____ Other:_____

Other Special Problems: alcohol_____ drugs_____ legal_____

medical_____ (use back of sheet for additional information)

NAME_____

MATCHED?_____

CONNECT CONTACT

NAME_____

DATE	KIND OF CONTACT? BY WHOM?	RESPONSE/NEEDS

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
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(608) 256 3890

CONNECT - GUIDELINES FOR CHILDBIRTH COACHES

Many CONNECT volunteers have the opportunity to share in the birth of a child during their match with a pregnant teen. This is an important and fulfilling volunteer experience. Most volunteers find that while they are providing essential support to the pregnant and laboring young mother they are being "let in on" one of the most outstanding life events in the young woman's life. It is not uncommon for the volunteer to feel grateful to the teen mom, because it can be one of the most exciting events they have ever been a part of. However not all labors and deliveries are wonderful, many of them can be agonizing, scarey and sometimes sad. Your role will be to encourage the teen mom on and to provide what emotional support you can to her family members and the young dad if he is present.

Below are some guidelines that may be helpful. All of the items are not essential, but will be helpful in providing support during the labor, delivery and afterwards.

- Attend classes as often as possible. Some classes may require your attendance. The SAM classes are more used to not always having coaches there but try to attend if you can. If you are unable to attend, please be sure to tell your match.

- Take a hospital tour with your match. Even if you have been there before it provides a good opportunity to share in the preparation.

- If you miss movies at childbirth classes, attend the movies about childbirth at one of the hospitals or make other arrangements to see them with your match.

- Go to at least one doctor appointment. This can really help. You will be able to meet the doctor and have some idea what is going on.

- Spend some individual time with the adolescent working on a birth plan. You will learn how to do this in the classes. If you need more help, we can get you some other information.

- Meet out of class occasionally to practice and to get to know the other family members if it seems appropriate and the teen wants you to.

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- When your match is a couple of weeks from her due date, keep her informed about how she can reach you. Make sure that she has your phone numbers and knows if you will provide transportation to the hospital or not. If you will be away, we can help find a "substitute",so let us know too.

- Be clear on what other obligations you have that may come first... if you never can attend a labor at night, let her know. If you have family or work obligations which are not flexible inform her so she will know what to expect.

- Plan to visit once at the hospital and carry out the relationship post partum. If you know that your match needs something for the baby, please notify us, we can often help.

- If you feel like the father of the baby or any of the grandparents need support or someone to talk with, please notify the office. From time to time there is a support group for the parents of teen parents (parents of males and females,expectant or parenting)

- Keep Peg informed about the status of the pregnancy. When your match delivers, after you've had some sleep, call the office. Keep track of the number of hours which you have spent with your match, and report them monthly.

- If you want to talk anything over, please call, we are here to listen and give suggestions in working with teen parents. If there is a special problem, need or concern we will help find the right resources.

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a program for young parents CONNECT

Dear Friend, In some way you or a member of your family has been involved with CONNECT or the YOUNG PARENT PROJECT. Please take the time to help us by filling out this evaluation. It is a goal of Family Enhancement to help people to help themselves and each other. You might think about whether any one you have met at Family Enhancement has helped you in your personal life. In answering, please also think of the people you have helped. (by listening, exchanging child care, helping with a problem)

This evaluation is important. It helps us to explain to funders why they should be funding us. It also helps us to make our programs responsive to the changing needs of participants.

*** *** *** *** *** *** ***

EVALUATION

Have you, your child or family member been matched with a volunteer? _____
come to Parent Centers? _____
(# of times _____) , Have you recieved the Parent Center News? _____
Have you, your child or family member had someone talk with you on the phone? _____
Taken you, or a family member to appointments? _____ Developed friendships
from the program? _____ If so with: staff _____ volunteers _____
other participants _____.

Has your experience with CONNECT or Parent Centers made a difference for you and/or your family? yes _____ no _____

If so, how?

_____ Conversation
_____ A break from childcare
_____ Entertainment for you or your child
_____ Outings with someone you met
_____ Someone just to chat with
_____ Personal Support
_____ Helpful Information
_____ Referrals
_____ Problem Solving
_____ Emergency Assistance
_____ Other (please note)
_____

Since you, or a family member have had contact with the project(s), have you talked with anyone when you have been experiencing personal stress?
yes _____ no _____ Why?

What do you like about this project?

What do you like least about this project?

How can we make this project better?

(Please feel free to use the back of this page for additional comments.)

I am:(check any that apply)

a mom _____ a dad _____ an expectant parent _____ a grandparent _____
15-18 _____ 18-21 _____ 21-25 _____ 25-35 _____ 35-45 _____
45-55 _____ 55-65 _____ 65+ _____

Number of Children:_____
Ages of Children:_____ _____

Thankyou.

United Way of Dane County

EVALUATION CUMULATIVE CONNECT

Total number of returned evaluations 26

Breakdown of ages responding		Number of children
15-18	10	11
18-21	12	17 (one has 3)
21-25		
25-35	4	9 (4,2,2,)
35-45		
45-55		
55-65		
65+		

	yes	no	not sure
match	16	6	4
attend centers	22	4	
phone contact	26		
taken you to appts.	5		
developed friendships	20	4	2

staff	volunteers	participants
16	20	18

Has your experience with CONNECT made a difference for you and/or your family?

yes: 20 no: 2 not sure: 4

conversation	21
break from childcare	20
entertainment for your or child	14
outings with someone that you have met	11
someone to chat with	18
personal support	19
helpful information	20
referrals	13
problem solving	18
emergency assistance	6
other	

Since you or a family member have had contact with the project, have you talked with anyone when you have been experiencing personal stress?

yes: 21 no: 5

why?

What do you like most? (see next page)

What do you like least? (see next page)

How can we make this project better? (see next page)

What do you like most?

flexibility helpfulness
It gives me a chance to meet other parents and get ideas on different ways to parent.
It really helped to realize what I had to face, not the only one.
Other adults my age.
I'm not sure.
other people
coming each week, other teen moms
volunteering
I found it easier to tell people I was stressed and scared.
I am learning to be me.
I don't need to pretend to know everything.
Place to call when I want to know something.
The help I have received.
I like meeting other young parents.
My volunteer really understands.
My volunteer helps me talks with my mom.
It's always there when I need it.
I like it because I don't use drugs to have a good time.
choosing topics
other people
Other parents who know more because they have been doing it longer.
Good to meet others in my situation.
It's fun.
Calling my volunteer when I am lonely.
People really understand.

What do you like least? How can we make it better?

Can't come to parent center much.
more social activity
more open time
more fun stuff at parent center
Don't talk about problems so much.
more time to be here
more blacks, more open time
We need more dads.
We need more money so we can be open more and not worry about funding.
Get more new books, more money.
I don't like any group.
I don't want anyone to know what I'm doing.
more staff
more food
more fun
open more, and later

SAMPLE LETTER

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
605 Spruce Street • Madison WI 53715
(608) 256 3890

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CONNECT

The Family Enhancement Program sponsors a volunteer program to assist teenaged parents and their family members. Volunteers work with teenaged parents one to one providing a variety of helpful tasks. Each circumstance is very individual, however volunteer jobs range from being a friend, to a labor coach to helping a young parent with child management skills or transporting a parent to Parents Place.

This project has been very successful due to volunteers who were willing to give their own special talents to someone who needed a friend. Many teenaged parents are overwhelmed; by parenting, dealing with changing relationships, or by trying to balance all of their new roles. Many teenaged parents become isolated without the assistance of someone to talk with.

It is hard to estimate the number of hours this volunteer job will take. The amount of time is flexible. What is important is that this project have people who are willing to take some of their personal time to spend time with another parent who needs their support and encouragement. Each match is made after talking with a volunteer to see what kind of time they have right then. We do hope that we can count on your assistance for about a year. But we also do understand changes in your schedule or family that will cause difficulties with this from time to time.

We do ask that you fill out the pre-screening forms and think the reasons you want to volunteer. You will either be given an interview in person or by phone before the training begins. Please call if you would like to take the training. At the end of the training, people will have a chance to re-assess their own desires to be a volunteer. Most early matches will be given with two volunteers assigned. Then there will be a conference with CONNECT staff, and a meeting with all the volunteers on the project soon after the training.

Please pass on this information if you know of someone who might be interested. If you have any questions, please call Peg at 256-3890. If you plan on coming to the training, please also call.

Enclosed is a pre-screening tool, a CONNECT brochure, and a Family Enhancement Program brochure.

Training begins Monday evening September 17 from 7:00-10:00 and continues September 29th (Saturday) from 9:00-3:00. On October 8th at 6:00 a potluck for all volunteers will be held.

Please call for more details... Thanks

Peg Scholtes

SAMPLE LETTER

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

a program for Young Parents and their families

605 Spruce Street • Madison WI 53715
(608) 256 3890

To: Community Agency People, Organizations and Interested Community People
From: Peg Scholtes, Program Facilitator, Family Enhancement

This is just a reminder about programs for young (under 21 years old) that The Family Enhancement Program has to offer for adolescents and other young parents in Dane County. Please take the time to read about the project. The past year has been very successful for young parents and they are attending our programs in record numbers. We need your help in reaching all young parents, even if they do not seem to need specialized assistance. We are a prevention program.

CONNECT creates personal and community support for young parents by linking them with trained volunteers. Volunteers are screened and trained by Family Enhancement staff and volunteers. Volunteers at the CONNECT project include:

- Parents (mothers and fathers)
- Spanish speaking people, and diverse economic and cultural representation
- Grandparents (many of whom have had children who were teen parents)
- Current and Former teenaged parents
- People with expertise in many areas

Volunteers, staff and participants work together to determine the specific individual and family needs. Volunteers may assist young parents in a number of ways. Below is a sampling of the kinds of services provided by CONNECT:

- childbirth coach
- phone calls and visits
- tutor assistance
- translation assistance
- occasional childcare or respite care
- sharing of home management, financial or parenting skills
- transportation for doctor, legal, court related visits
- transportation to parent centers, other community activities
- advocacy
- modeling of child management skills
- access to recreational and educational services

Any teenaged or young parent or family member is encouraged to participate in CONNECT and the YOUNG PARENT PROJECT. Involvement levels range from only receiving the Parent Center News to participation in groups for teenaged parents, to having a volunteer from CONNECT make weekly contact or more if needed. We hope to make the newsletter available to all teenaged parents. The newsletter contains articles written by other young parents about their experiences, it also contains information about resources in Dane County for young families.

Please help us in our efforts. All you need to do is send us the name of anyone

who might like the parent center newsletter. If you want to make a specific referral, please call The Family Enhancement Office.

Parents of Teenaged Parents are often in a stressful situation. Our volunteers are also available for them. We also have an ongoing support group for these parents.

All of our programs are voluntary. On special occasions (where social services is involved ect.) we will keep records. Records are available to participants only, or with a consent form) This will be done when it is to the participants advantage to have such records.

Family Enhancement is a prevention program. Our major purpose is to enable people to help themselves and each other. We work to enhance families as well as to help those who are in transitional stress or at risk. Other programs Family Enhancement facilitates are:

Parents of Teens Groups
Parent Centers (Parents Place South and Parents Place West)
Training and Consultation on family related topics
Integrating Work and Family Life
Facilitator Training- Support Group Facilitator Training

Thank you for your help in referring young parents and their family members to our program.

If you know of anyone who would like more information on volunteering, please have them call our office.

Enclosed are some brochures, please display them or pass them out. Let me know if you need more.

Thanks again. Peg Scholtes

United Way
of Dane County

APPENDIX II

- A Facilitated Meeting
- Change Wisdom
- Teen Sexual Activity Fact Sheet
- Live Births by County, Race, Age of Mother -- Wisconsin

A FACILITATED MEETING

Meetings which encourage active cooperation are desireable at almost any time. You will find that if you are working on a community development project, they are essential.

When a meeting is facilitated, the facilitator will be responsible to the others for:
- planning an agenda (often with the help of the group)
- making sure the room is set up (not in rows, circle preferred)
- having snacks or coffee, if necessary
- leading introductions

The facilitator ensures that all people take responsibility for what goes on in the meeting, and helps to move things along by encouraging shy people, discouraging people who talk too much or play the "expert role," and making sure that all of the participants at the meeting get a chance to say what they want to say.

Using techniques will help this facilitation. Brainstorming, listing, breaking into small groups, using writing exercises, and discussion groups are some examples. (You will find books which describe facilitative techniques will be helpful if you are new at facilitation.)

The facilitator also needs to make sure that people are assigned to the tasks which are decided as being necessary in the meeting. Deadlines and helpful contacts make delegation of responsibility more productive. Too many meetings end with a list of things to do and with no one to do them.

The most useful facilitative technique for getting meetings started and moving is the topical introduction. This introduction is helpful for many reasons:
- helps people get to know one another
- gets people grounded in "why we are here"
- helps discussions (if everyone has already said something, it's easier to talk again. Some people have trouble speaking in front of a group, and may need this kind of encouragement.)
- helps to share personal issues so that you can get on to your work; it may help to keep on the topic later in the meeting.

Another important role of the facilitator is helping the group to stick to an agenda. You will have much better attendance if your group meetings get over when you announce they will end. You are usually better off ending a meeting and holding-over agenda items than dragging out a meeting. IF it is necessary, let the group decide how to proceed when you are out of time.

Below is an example of a personal introduction. Have someone who knows what you want go first. Modeling technique is often helpful as many people are used to more formal and less personal meetings,

and will be helped by an example.

The facilitator requests that people share their names, something that they have done in the last week which was fun for them and their family, and one of the reasons why they are at the meeting. This is an example of Jane Smith's introduction:

"My name is Jane Smith. I live with my two school aged children on Center Street. We spent last weekend cleaning out the garage and actually had a good time! We found projects and articles that none of us had seen for years. I am anxious to be at the meeting today because I want to help volunteers to get matched up with young parents to get their babies to the clinic for check-ups. When my son was 6 weeks old, a birth defect was found during a routine exam. Now it has been surgically corrected. If I hadn't had a neighbor who could drive me, we might not have discovered the defect before it caused big trouble."

A SAMPLE AGENDA FOR A FACILITATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MEETING

9:00	Welcome everyone
9:05 - 9:15	Introductions (Have people present share who they are, where they work, and one of the reasons they are concerned about teen parents.)
9:15 - 9:25	Short explanation of why the group is interested in a project, and what has been done so far.
9:25 - 9:40	Listing of the needs of teen parents in your community.
9:40 - 10:00	Discussion of how volunteers could assist in meeting these needs.
10:00 - 10:15	Dividing up into committees to interview community leaders on their attitudes regarding teen parents.
10:15 - 10:20	Choose next meeting date.
10:20	Close by saying thank you.

CHANGE WISDOM

Peter Scholtes 1982

Change is acceptable:

- When the idea is my own and not someone else's.
- When it is presented as a problem which I am invited to participate in solving.
- When it is anticipated, rather than a surprise.
- When those who bear the burden of change are supported by others, rather than isolated and alone.
- When the change comes one manageable chunk at a time, rather than a landslide of change, out of control.
- When it is done with gentleness, humor and warmth rather than compulsively and humorlessly.
- When I am sure that those who want me to change care about me and that those who care about me will continue to care about me after I have changed.
- When I am ready for change. Don't work at getting me to change. Work at helping me to get ready to change myself.

CHANGE WISDOM: PEOPLE DO NOT RESIST CHANGE. THEY RESIST <u>BEING</u> CHANGED.

TEEN SEXUAL ACTIVITY FACT SHEET

1. Percentages of unmarried teens who have not had sexual intercourse:[1]

Age	Female %	Male %
18	48	34
17	56	52
16	68	55
15	80	64
14	89	76
13	98	86

2. Nearly two-thirds of unwed teenage women who have had intercourse report that they never use birth control or use it inconsistently.[1]

   - 41% of these did not use birth control because they thought (usually mistakenly) that they could not become pregnant.

   - 39% realized they could become pregnant; however, most of those reported that they had not used birth control because they had not expected to have intercourse at the time it occurred.

3. 42% of 15-19 year old males report that they practice some form of birth control. 23.2% use a condom, and 18.8% practice withdrawal (an unreliable method of birth control).[2]

4. Of the two million young women in the U.S. turning 14 this year:[1]

   - 39% (4 out of 10) will have at least one pregnancy while in their teens.

   - 21% (2 out of 10) will have at least one live birth while in their teens.

   - 15% (1 out of 7) will have at least one abortion while in their teens.

   - 6% will have at least one miscarriage while in their teens.

5. Half of premarital pregnancies occur within six months of the young woman's first intercourse; more than one-fifth occur within a month after first intercourse.[1]

6. Most teenage women have been having intercourse nine months or more before going to a clinic to get birth control. A fear that they are pregnant is the most frequently mentioned reason for going to the clinic.[1]

7. Pregnancy is the primary reason teenage women drop out of school.[1]

Please see reverse side for reference source

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Teen Sexual Activity Fact Sheet

Sources:

[1]The Alan Guttmacher Institute Teenage Pregnancy: The Problem That Hasn't Gone Away, 1981 360 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10010

[2]B. Stokes, "Men in Family Planning," World Watch Paper, Dec., 1980, cited in R. Hatcher, et.al., Contraceptive Technology, 11th Revised Edition, Irving Publishers, 1982.

Compiled by:
Bonnie Trudell
CESA #15 Human Growth &
Development Coordinator
1/84

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TABLE 15

LIVE BIRTHS BY COUNTY, BY RACE AND AGE OF MOTHER
WISCONSIN, 1981

(RESIDENT DATA)

COUNTY	TOTAL W	TOTAL NW	0-15 W	0-15 NW	16 W	16 NW	17 W	17 NW	18 W	18 NW	19 W	19 NW	20 W	20 NW	21 W	21 NW	22 W	22 NW
ADAMS	176	1			1		3		8		8		12		15		12	1
ASHLAND	275	27		3	1	1	10	1	12	2	21	2	22	1	19	3	24	2
BARRON	686	6	3		5		10		36		45	1	48	2	42		60	
BAYFIELD	191	21	1				1	1	4	5	11	2	6	1	6		14	
BROWN	2710	113	9	5	10	2	39	3	70	11	93	6	160	8	132	5	176	10
BUFFALO	197				1		2		5		11		10		22		19	
BURNETT	195	8	1		1		4	1	7	1	8	1	14		11		10	
CALUMET	514	5			6		14		11		12		34		28	1	40	
CHIPPEWA	917	7	5		12		22		26		51	1	61		60		91	2
CLARK	578	3			3		18		15		19		38		43		34	1
COLUMBIA	666	2	3		6		15		28		30		30		43		50	1
CRAWFORD	283	1			4		5		4		9		10		13		26	
DANE	6404	234	4	4	17	2	52	9	71	4	133	6	185	8	211	16	221	10
DODGE	1168	5	3		8		23		43		59	1	79		86	1	85	
DOOR	394	3	1		2		4		14		17		20		13		29	
DOUGLAS	691	21	5		11	2	16	1	31		43	1	60	1	62	1	50	2
DUNN	524	12	2		1		10	1	23		29		42	1	29	1	46	
EAU CLAIRE	1200	65	4	1	12	1	25		40	7	64	3	64	4	68	8	63	5
FLORENCE	64				1				1		4		3		7		6	
FOND DU LAC	1447	13	1		6		21		43		56		78		74	1	102	
FOREST	148	13	1		3	1	5	1	8		16	3	8	1	12		11	2
GRANT	810	4	4		9		13		24		47		58		64		72	
GREEN	466	5	1		10		16		10		20		22		29		29	1
GREEN LAKE	323	2			1		8		20		19		20		22		20	1
IOWA	342		1		1		4		14		19		18		23		30	
IRON	72								1		2		4		4		7	
JACKSON	254	17			3		8		15	3	10	2	12	1	18	3	27	1
JEFFERSON	1016	13	2		4		27		33	1	53	1	64	1	63		72	1
JUNEAU	351	4	3		6		12		16		22		26		25	1	31	
KENOSHA	1726	89	5	2	22	7	45	6	55	6	93	4	125	8	100	4	114	6
KEWAUNEE	343	4			2		6		8		14		25	1	23		31	
LA CROSSE	1364	32	2		10	1	21		34	4	48	3	68	1	68	4	94	3
LAFAYETTE	338	1			3		9		13		21		19		29		17	1
LANGLADE	312	1	3		1		3		12		35		23	1	23		22	
LINCOLN	405	1			1		16		10		19		24		39		22	
MANITOWOC	1229	33	5		10		17	1	31	1	60	2	65	2	59	4	67	3
MARATHON	1773	33		2	9		28	1	57	3	77		109	3	134	3	121	1
MARINETTE	667	4	3		11		15		28		35		42		48		41	1
MARQUETTE	163		1				4		4		3		14		12		15	
MENOMINEE	5	91		2		2		5	1	4		10		9		8		6
MILWAUKEE	11712	4093	45	162	97	159	195	247	372	308	509	355	618	350	724	291	793	297
MONROE	576	6	4		3		11		24	1	38		28	1	44	1	35	
OCONTO	429	6	2		4		8	1	13		27	1	35		33		30	
ONEIDA	462	5	2		3		4	1	17		26		26		45		30	1
OUTAGAMIE	2138	90	4		12	3	34	3	58	3	80	5	102	2	126	4	140	11
OZAUKEE	959	4	3		4		8		14		31		41		51		44	
PEPIN	126	1			2		1		2		7		13		10		10	
PIERCE	524	2	4		7		10		10		33		30		35	1	49	
POLK	552	8	2	1	5		22		17	1	34	2	35	1	38	1	29	
PORTAGE	880	11			3		18		20		32	1	47	1	52		56	1
PRICE	229	3			1		5		12		15	1	10		12		16	
RACINE	2454	401	11	14	32	22	66	32	103	24	133	33	129	37	158	38	169	24
RICHLAND	297	5			2		6		7	1	13	1	22	1	15		20	1
ROCK	2009	106	4	3	27	6	42	10	81	2	86	8	141	11	147	8	149	5
RUSK	249	2	3		3		5		10		12		18		18		19	
ST CROIX	768	4	1		11		16		21		31	1	43		57		42	
SAUK	683	13	2		5		23		18	2	46		43		46	1	38	
SAWYER	186	53	1	1	2			1	6	2	8	7	19	7	12	4	13	7
SHAWANO	517	26	1		10		15		10	3	17	3	30	2	43	2	25	
SHEBOYGAN	1541	54	6		12	1	29	2	42	3	73	5	91	2	116	6	113	7
TAYLOR	339				3		11		11		25		29		13		28	
TREMPEALEAU	415	1			5		11		19		26		31		26		36	
VERNON	440				5		10		12		15		27		32		34	
VILAS	188	29			1	2	3	1	5	1	9	3	9	4	12	1	16	2
WALWORTH	953	16	1		7		15	1	24		56		63	2	70	3	66	2
WASHBURN	200	2			5		7		9		13		5		18		20	
WASHINGTON	1415	6	3		8		24		25		47		62	1	78		88	
WAUKESHA	3769	54	7	2	18		44		71	3	123	1	155	2	136	2	172	1
WAUPACA	685	5	2		3		14		24		38		60		44		56	
WAUSHARA	235	1	1		7		5		10		14	1	10		13		15	
WINNEBAGO	1846	21	7		16		29		43	1	81		93	3	122	1	125	3
WOOD	1192	19	1		5		27	1	39	1	71	2	82	2	95	2	90	1
UNKNOWN																		
** TOTAL **	68357	5941	190	202	542	212	1271	331	2035	408	3105	479	3847	483	4225	430	4566	424

Seven births, race unknown, not included.

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TABLE 15

LIVE BIRTHS BY COUNTY, BY RACE AND AGE OF MOTHER
WISCONSIN, 1981

(RESIDENT DATA)

COUNTY	23 W	23 NW	24 W	24 NW	25-29 W	25-29 NW	30-34 W	30-34 NW	35-39 W	35-39 NW	40-44 W	40-44 NW	45+ W	45+ NW	UNKNOWN W	UNKNOWN NW
ADAMS	12		14		56		25		7		3					
ASHLAND	17	2	20	1	84	2	37	5	7	1	1	1				
BARRON	65		46	1	206		89	2	26		5					
BAYFIELD	15		13		77	9	31	3	10		2					
BROWN	200	8	213	5	1043	19	473	22	80	5	11	4	1			
BUFFALO	21		18		60		23		4		1					
BURNETT	17		18	1	67	3	31		5	1	1					
CALUMET	34		38	1	197	1	73	1	21	1	5		1			
CHIPPEWA	86	1	66		294	1	107	1	29	1	6		1			
CLARK	44		33		187	2	93		42		9					
COLUMBIA	49	1	57		212		110		28		5					
CRAWFORD	19		18	1	110		50		9		6					
DANE	251	7	307	18	1734	83	1015	58	185	9	16		2			
DODGE	102		95		360	2	181	1	40		3		1			
DOOR	35		38		141	2	67	1	10		2		1			
DOUGLAS	59	3	39	1	218	4	78	3	17	2	2					
DUNN	39		44		167	6	76	2	14		2	1				
EAU CLAIRE	81	2	90	7	437	11	211	12	38	3	2	1	1			
FLORENCE	6		2		23		10		1							
FOND DU LAC	101	1	124	1	532	4	234	3	60	2	14	1	1			
FOREST	9	2	9		37	3	20		6		3					
GRANT	61	1	59		269	2	97	1	24		9					
GREEN	36		35	1	144		75	3	13		6					
GREEN LAKE	30		15		111		44		12			1	1			
IOWA	30		28		105		54		11		4					
IRON	8		7		21		14		4							
JACKSON	19	1	20	1	76	4	34	1	9		3					
JEFFERSON	84	1	71		362	4	146	2	30	1	5	1				
JUNEAU	23		25		101	2	43	1	12		5		1			
KENOSHA	119	10	143	6	634	24	217	5	48		6	1				
KEWAUNEE	19		37		101	1	62	1	12	1	3					
LA CROSSE	83	1	115	3	522	7	255	5	34		10					
LAFAYETTE	29		31		121		37		9							
LANGLADE	13		25		93		44		14		1					
LINCOLN	29		35		138	1	53		13		6					
MANITOWOC	97	2	98		468	11	197	3	65	2	10			2		
MARATHON	114	1	147	2	629	12	271	2	68	1	9	1		1		
MARINETTE	58		65		216	1	85	1	17	1	2		1			
MARQUETTE	10		15		49		25		7		4					
MENOMINEE	1	8		8	2	19	1	8		2						
MILWAUKEE	819	273	833	233	4255	885	1959	391	431	119	58	23	4			
MONROE	51	1	48		165		91	1	29		5	1				
OCONTO	35		35	1	133	1	55	1	15	1	4					
ONEIDA	34		31		166	2	58	1	17		3					
OUTAGAMIE	138	5	173	4	833	26	345	11	77	9	11	3	5	1		
OZAUKEE	55		68		340	7	223	1	46	1	10		1			
PEPIN	6	1	18		33		14		8		1				1	
PIERCE	37		39		171	1	75		23		1					
POLK	26		51		201	1	74	1	13		5					
PORTAGE	77	1	58		304	4	168	3	37		6					
PRICE	17		12		82	1	38	1	8		1					
RACINE	175	30	177	28	832	74	374	34	82	10	13	1				
RICHLAND	24		31		94	1	52		9		2					
ROCK	169	3	161	5	687	26	274	14	33	5	7		1			
RUSK	19		29		71	1	32		7		3	1				
ST CROIX	51		51		289	1	128	1	25	1	3				1	
SAUK	42		60	1	229	6	100	2	25		4	1				
SAWYER	12	3	12	3	79	11	16	5	6	2						
SHAWANO	42	1	53	4	151	7	95	3	20	1	5					
SHEBOYGAN	137	2	117	3	520	15	236	4	40	3	9			1		
TAYLOR	27		30		110		35		9		3					
TREMPEALEAU	27		24	1	123		63		19		4		1			
VERNON	34		35		143		70		19		3		1			
VILAS	7	1	15	3	69	9	33	2	8		1					
WALWORTH	71	1	69		299	4	166	2	43		5	1				
WASHBURN	13		14		66	2	27		2		1					
WASHINGTON	99	1	115	1	508		268	1	82	2	6		2			
WAUKESHA	220	5	225	1	1410	18	956	17	214	2	16		2			
WAUPACA	53		46		208	4	112	1	21		7					
WAUSHARA	15		18		77		39		9		2					
WINNEBAGO	127	2	159	2	638	3	321	6	74		11					
WOOD	94		89		386	8	167	2	38		7		1			
UNKNOWN																
** TOTAL **	4878	382	5169	348	24116	1353	11452	652	2510	189	399	43	30	5	2	

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RESOURCES FOR ADOLESCENT PARENTS

PREVENTION AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

RESOURCES FOR ADOLESCENT PARENTS ; PREVENTION AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

In Wisconsin:

Barb Barnard
Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Specialist
Office for Children, Youth and Families
1 W. Wilson
P.O. Box #7851
Madison, Wisconsin, 53707

Information on statistics, for technical assistance resources; notify when you start a program, so they may keep up-to-date information on programs for adolescent parents.

Lorraine Davis
Supervisor for School Age Mothers
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
125 S. Webster St.
Box 7841
Madison, Wisconsin, 53707

Resources for school districts. Coordination of School Age Mother's Programs. Will provide information about programs in your area.

Wisconsin Alliance Concerned with School-Age Parents
Contact:
Peggy Clapp
Lady Pitts School
820 E. Knapp St., 3rd Floor
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202

WACSAP is a group of people throughout the state who are interested in school age parents, their needs and problems. This organization takes a leadership role in providing information, training conferences on a statewide and local level (8 regions). Members receive newsletters which provide good resources and information.

Wisconsin Prevention Network
c/o Roger Williams
University of Wisconsin/Mental Health
610 Langdon
Madison, Wisconsin, 53706

A network of people and programs in Wisconsin which provides information and works for increasing prevention efforts locally and statewide. Good information available, may have members willing to share expertise.

The Family Enhancement Program
605 Spruce St.
Madison, Wisconsin, 53715
(608) 256-3890

Resources for parent center development; caring for children in drop-in settings; videotapes available on fathering, working parents, teen parents. Training for facilitators, workshops and resources on family programs. Curriculums for training people to work with teen parents.

Out of State:

Family Resource Coalition
230 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 1625
Chicago, Illinois, 60601
(312) 726-4750

An excellent resource. A membership organization of community-based prevention-focused family resource programs. Provides a clearinghouse on programs, technical assistance in starting or modifying programs and has a quarterly journal.

Volunteer-National Center
1111 N. 19th St., Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia, 22209

Provides information, resources, publications on use of volunteers. Of special note: The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs and Step by Step Management of Volunteer Programs in Agencies.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute
360 Park Avenue South
New York, New York, 10010

A corporation for research, public policy analysis and public education. Has fact book Teenage Pregnancy, the Problem that Hasn't Gone Away, and Teenage Pregnancy and other statistical and practical information.

The Children's Defense Fund
122 C. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20001

A public charity-works for children to provide an effective voice - especially poor, minority, homeless, abused and neglected children. Works to prevent teen pregnancy and to ensure educational and job opportunities for youth. They have a preventative focus and publish literature of considerable interest.

For More Information

County Department of Social Services - look for listing under your County's name in phone book - programs and services vary.

Other Possible Resources

Social Service Organizations
Human Service Organizations
Adoption Agencies
Counseling Agencies
Church Organizations
Ecumenical Action Groups
Hospitals
Schools and School Districts
YMCA's YWCA's
Family Services
Children Service
March of Dimes
Community Action Commission
Urban League

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lewis, Martha and Lewis, Howard R., The Parent's Guide to Teenage Sex and Pregnancy, St. Martin's Press, Inc., 175 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y., 10010, 1980.

This is an especially good complete book, available in paper back. It is highly recommended for anyone who will be working with teen parents, adolescents in general and their families. It is realistic and confronts many of the issues that people think about, but have trouble talking about. Included are:

Your Sexualized Teenager - What you need to know as the parent of an adolescent in the Eighties.

Teach Your Child About Sex - They want you to for they're likely to be ignorant and in danger.

Your Own Growing Pains - Expect fear of aging, guilt, jealousy, sexual tensions.

How To Handle Sex Talks - Tips to ease discussion and promote sexual responsibility.

Relating to Sexual Intercourse - If your youngsters live with someone, if they're sexually indiscriminate - here is what you need to know. Help your child to resist premature intercourse. Free them to say "no." Protect them from pregnancy - you won't be encouraging intercourse if you talk up contraception, but expect resistance.

My Worst Fears Are Realized - Discussions of adoption, abortion, the medical risks for a teen parent. Good information for the parents of a teen father. Questions of adolescent marriage. How to support lifestyles that parents don't necessarily approve of.

Oettinger, Katherine B., Not My Daughter- Facing Up to Adolescent Pregnancy, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1979.

This is a compassionate book which addresses prevention, and the choices available for teen pregnancy issues. This book also does a good job addressing the problems of teen fathers. This is a good book for someone who is starting a program becuase it addresses programs across the country that work with adolescent parents. It has a good resource guide of films, pamphlets, and other helps for community workers and parents.

Foster, Sallie, The One Girl in Ten - A Self-Portrait of the Teen-Age Mother, The Arbor Press,Claremont, California, 91711, 1982.

This is a current book with good interviews on a multitude of questions answered by teen parents. This would be a good book to read if one is starting on a project. Frank and honest, it addresses issues which affect all teens.

Frank, Daniel B., Deep Blue Funk and Other Stories, the Ounce of Prevention Fund, Chicago, 1983.

This book addresses the experiences of Black teen parents. It is a chronicle of their own personal stories edited by a worker in a center for teens in Evanston Illinois. This would be a helpful book to read before starting a project. Helps to reflect the diversity of each individual's situation. Read just for the sheer pleasure of it as well!

Richards, Arlene Kramer and Willis, Irene, What To Do If You or Someone You Know is Pregnant, Lathrop, Lee and Shepard Books, New York: 1983.

This is important basic reading for teens or for people who want to help them. Uses "jargon" words as well as proper names for sexual functions. Uses stories and situations to offer good alternatives. Available in paperback.

Three good books for teenage parents by: Lindsay, Jeanne Warren;

1. Teen Parenting - The Challenge of Babies and Toddlers
2. Pregnant Too Soon - Adoption is an Option
3. Do I Have A Daddy? - (For single parent Moms to use with their children.)

Morning Glory Press, 6595 San Haroldo Way, Buena Park, California, 90620.

Moberg, D. Paul, Evaluation of Prevention Programs, - A Basic Guide for Practioners, Board of Regents, University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Clearinghouse, 1954 East Washington Ave., Madison, Wisconsin, 53704-5291.

This is a good publication about evaluation. It is a complete and useful guide. Defines reasons and uses, provides a variety of options which are appropriate for prevention programs.